

THE LIFE

OF

THE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD

THE LIFE
AND
POLITICAL CAREER
OF
THE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD.
K.G.

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THE TRUTH IS, A STATE OF AFFAIRS THE CREATURE OF HIS AGE, THE CHILD OF CIRCUMSTANCES, THE
CREATION OF HIS TIMES."—B. D'ISRAËL

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PUBLISHERS' PREFACE.

THIS trustworthy record of the public life of Lord Beaconsfield will be found to do justice to the political opinions of the Statesman so lately taken from among us, without being guilty of any strong panegyric.

April 22, 1881.

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L I F E

OF

THE EARL OF BEACONSFIELD, K.G.

CHAPTER I.

His Family and Descent—His Grandfather—His father—
His Birth and Childhood—His Education—Is placed in
a Solicitor's Office.

ONE of the best and kindest proverbs that has come down to us from the days of old is *nil nisi bonum de mortuis*. When the grave is about to close over the remains of one who has fought in the battle of life, who has suffered wounds, and inflicted others in turn, but has manfully maintained the contest which all have to wage who are gifted with talents or tastes that force them out of the dull beaten track of every-day life, we cannot but feel some sympathy with the career that has come to an end. And when the career is that of a man who by sheer force of personal character has raised himself from a comparatively humble position to the loftiest in the land, triumphing over all those obstacles which are apt to crush persons of an ordinary type, whatever our religious or our political creed,

we cannot help feeling some admiration for him, and if we are at all of a kindly disposition, we forget the man's faults and failings in the light of his brilliant public services. As Pericles says in his "Funeral Oration," "Envy arises against a living rival; but that which no longer stands in our way is honoured with a kindly feeling from which all idea of antagonism is excluded."* All rivalry is at an end; and our better feelings find full scope and play.

It is with some such sentiments as these that those many thousands of our countrymen who have never supported or even approved the political career of Benjamin D'Israeli† in his lifetime, now look back on the memory of Lord Beaconsfield. He may not have been a "man after their own hearts;" his view of the wants and necessities of the age and the country may have differed largely from their own; but they still feel that from *his* point of view he did his duty to his Sovereign; and what higher praise or credit can a citizen of England claim, so far as regards this world?

It is a commonplace remark at this time that for the last ten years the best abused persons in England have been Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone. And this is not a matter of wonder; for the men most conspicuous in the political and literary world are those against whom the great mass of mankind

* Thucydides, b. ii. ch. 45.

† The name, when analyzed, is only Israel, with the aristocratic 'de' prefixed, and the usual 'i' added, in imitation of the Italian style. The name was always written with an apostrophe and a large I by Isaac D'Israeli, and by his son Benjamin until quite recently, when he seems to have preferred Disraeli.

feel authorized to dart their arrows, the very conspicuousness of their position appearing to justify their aim. But this claim of Benjamin D'Israeli dates from a far earlier time ; for, indeed, ever since he first entered on public life, more than forty years ago, he has served as a butt for the ridicule and censure of the common herd, who cannot rise so high as to comprehend the actions and motives of those who wander out of the beaten track, and who dare to think, speak, and act independently for themselves.

Lord Beaconsfield, though born in a comparatively humble sphere of life, was not devoid of the pride of ancestry, and, indeed, he may be said to be as proud of his lineage as any member of the houses of Howard, Stanley, or Talbot can be.

He gives us, in a biographical memoir prefixed to the collected works of his father, a most interesting account of the Israelitish race from whom he derived his descent. He shows how his grandfather, —after whom he was named Benjamin—was an Italian descendant of one of those Hebrew families whom the Inquisition forced to emigrate from the Spanish Peninsula at the end of the fifteenth century, to find a new home among the more tolerant citizens of the Venetian Republic. Lord Beaconsfield writes thus of his ancestors after they had fixed their abode in Venice, that, “grateful to the God of Judah, who had sustained them through unheard-of perils, they assumed the name of D'Israeli, a name never borne before or since by any other family, in order that their race might be for

ever recognized." They remained in Venice for a period of more than two centuries, and they flourished as merchants, undisturbed and unmolested. It was about the middle of the last century that his great-grandfather resolved that his younger son, Benjamin, should settle in England, where, through the recent failure of Prince Charles Edward, and the adverse opinion of the public in general to persecution in matters of religion, everything seemed so favourable to commerce and religious liberty. "The Jewish families who were then settled in England," as we learn from the above-mentioned source, "were few, though, from their wealth and other circumstances, they were far from unimportant. They were all of them Sephardim—that is to say, children of Israel, who had never quitted the shores of the Midland Ocean, until Torquemada had driven them from their pleasant residences and rich estates in Arragon and Andalusia, and Portugal, to seek greater blessings even than a clear atmosphere and a glowing sun, amid the marshes of Holland and the fogs of Britain." "It was not," writes Mr. Brandes,* "until the time of the Commonwealth that, protected by Cromwell himself, though not by any law, the Jews began to return to England." It is not at all clear, however, that the word "return" is applicable to the ancestors of Mr. D'Israeli, for they appear to have come originally from the south of Europe. Under George II., Mr. Pelham, the Prime Minister, was favourable to them per-

* "Lord Beaconsfield." a Study. By G. Brandes. Translated by Mrs. George Sturge 1880.

sonally; and it was during his administration, in the year 1748, that Benjamin D'Israeli the elder was formally admitted to the rights of citizenship in this country.

The families of most of those early settlers are now nearly extinct. They had held themselves aloof from the Hebrews of Northern Europe, then only occasionally stealing into England as from an inferior caste. The branch of the great family, which, notwithstanding their own sufferings from prejudice, however, they had the hardihood to look down upon, "have achieved an amount of wealth and consideration which the Sephardim, even with the patronage of Mr. Pelham, never could have contemplated. Nevertheless," his Lordship wrote, "at the time when my grandfather settled in England, and when Mr. Pelham, who was very favourable to the Jews, was Prime Minister, there might be found, among other Jewish families flourishing in this country, the Villa Reals, who brought wealth to these shores almost as great as their name, though that is the second in Portugal, and who have twice allied themselves with the English aristocracy, the Medinas—the Laras, who were our kinsmen—and the Mendez de Costas, who, I believe, still exist."

Benjamin D'Israeli, Lord Beaconsfield's grandfather, appears to have been a man of considerable wealth; he was one of the founders of the "Stock Exchange" of London, and was regarded as a rival of the Rothschilds. Indeed, it is said that on one occasion, early in the present century, the Emperor of Russia, when he required to raise a loan, applied

to him for help; and it was only on his refusal that he placed the negotiation in the hands of the house of Rothschild. He was, as Lord Beaconsfield tells us, "a man of ardent character; sanguine, courageous, speculative, and fortunate; with a temper which no disappointment could disturb, and a brain, amid reverses, full of resource. He made his fortune in the midway of life, and settled near Enfield, where he formed an Italian garden, entertained his friends, played whist with Sir Horace Mann (who was his great acquaintance, and who had known his brother at Venice as a banker), eat macaroni (which was dressed by the Venetian Consul), sang canzonettas, and notwithstanding a wife who never pardoned him for his name, and a son who disappointed all his plans, and who to the last hour of his life was an enigma to him, lived until he was nearly ninety, and then died in 1817, in the full enjoyment of prolonged existence." The date here given, however, is evidently a mistake, for in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for December, 1816, occurs the following notice of Mr. D'Israeli's death: "On the 28th of November, at Stoke Newington, in his 87th year, died Benjamin D'Israeli, Esq."

He (the grandfather) had sworn allegiance to King George the Second, and by successful trading as a money-lender, and as a speculator in scrip, had, in a very few years after commencing business in London, amassed a considerable fortune. It was Benjamin's intention that his son—his only child—should follow him in his business; but the Fates

ruled otherwise, for nature had disqualified him, from his cradle, for the busy pursuits of men. "A pale, pensive child, with large dark brown eyes, and flowing hair, . . . had grown up beneath this roof of worldly energy and enjoyment, indicating even in his infancy, by the whole carriage of his life, that he was of a different order from those among whom he lived." Such was the childhood of Isaac D'Israeli, who, on arriving at the age of manhood, showed literary ambition and an ardent love for the work of authorship. As an instance of what a good-natured, easy-tempered man the grandfather must have been, it is only necessary to relate an anecdote bearing on Isaac D'Israeli's early life. On one occasion, when he ran away from home, and after some wanderings was found lying upon a tombstone in Hackney Churchyard, and brought back, his father "embraced him, and gave him a pony."

The first time that the grandfather became seriously alarmed respecting his son's future career in life, was when, after months of unusual abstraction and irritability, that son "produced a poem." "The loss of one of his argosies, uninsured," his biographer tells us, "could not have filled him with more blank dismay. His idea of a poet was formed from one of the prints of Hogarth hanging in his room, where an unfortunate wight in a garret was inditing an ode to riches, while dunned for his milk score."

In the end, in order to "eradicate this evil, and to prevent future disgrace," it was resolved that he

should be sent abroad ; and consequently "the unhappy poet was consigned, like a bale of goods," to his father's correspondent at Amsterdam, who had instructions to place him in some college of repute in that city.

He (Isaac D'Israeli) returned to England at the age of eighteen, a disciple of Rousseau. "My father," the son tells us years afterwards, "who had lost the timidity of his childhood, who, by nature was very impulsive, and indeed endowed with a degree of volatility which is only witnessed in the south of France, and which never deserted him to his last hour, was no longer to be controlled. His conduct was decisive. He enclosed his poem to Dr. Johnson, with an impassioned statement of his case, complaining, which he even did, that he had never found a counsellor or literary friend. He left his packet himself at Bolt Court, where he was received by Mr. Francis Barber, the Doctor's well-known black servant, and told to call again in a week. Be sure that he was very punctual ; but the packet was returned to him unopened, with a message that the illustrious Doctor was too ill to read anything. The unhappy and obscure aspirant, who received this disheartening message, accepted it, in his utter despondency, as a mechanical excuse." This must have been towards the close of the year 1784.

Not long after this, when the satires of Dr. Walcot ("Peter Pindar") were the subject of general discussion, an anonymous poem, entitled "On the Abuse of Satire," made its appearance

it was written after the style of Pope, and was addressed to Dr. Warton. The authorship of the poem—which indeed was but a satire in itself—remained for some time clouded in mystery. The subject of it, however, Dr. Walcot, came to the conclusion that the writer was none other than Mr. Hayley, the author of “The Triumph of Temper,” and a “virulent pasquinade” was the result. But this ill-considered movement on the part of Walcot “achieved the complete success of the anonymous writer.” “My father,” writes the future Lord Beaconsfield, “who came up to town to read the newspapers at the St. James’s Coffee-house, found their columns filled with extracts from the fortunate effusion of the hour, conjectures as to its writer, and much gossip respecting Walcot and Harley. He returned to Enfield laden with the journals, and presenting them to his parents, broke to them the intelligence that at length he was not only an author, but a successful one.”

One great result of the success which attended the publication of the anonymous satirical poem, was that not only was the ability of its author publicly recognized, but that he also through it made the acquaintance and acquired the warm friendship of Mr. H. J. Pye, then member for Berkshire, and who, later on (namely, in 1790), became Poet Laureate, and ultimately of great service to him in many ways. From this time Isaac D’Israeli devoted himself entirely to literature. One of his earliest works, which he published anonymously, was his “Curiosities of Literature,” the success of which

was so great that he determined to follow that particular style throughout his future career. Among his later works were the "Calamities of Authors, including some inquiries respecting their Moral and Literary Characters," the "Quarrels of Authors," and the "Life and Reign of Charles I."

He lived to the good old age of eighty-two—four years less than his father before him—and died in 1848, having married Miss Maria Basevi, a member of a well-known Jewish family, daughter of Mr. Nathan Basevi, merchant, of London, and aunt of the late Mr. George Basevi, the architect of the FitzWilliam Museum at Cambridge, whose death, it may be remembered, was occasioned by a fall from the lantern of Ely Cathedral in 1845.

It was long doubtful where the future Lord Beaconsfield first saw the light, for his father lived at different places in the neighbourhood of London, and did not settle down in the neighbourhood of Bloomsbury, which has often been thought to have been his birthplace, till a much later* date. It has been asserted that it was either Hackney or Stoke Newington; but as he told Lord Barrington only

* Mr. Isaac D'Iraeli lived in King's Road, near Gray's Inn, from 1809 to 1817, and from 1817 to 1826 he occupied a house at the south-west corner of Bloomsbury Square, in order to be near the Library of the British Museum. It was not until the last named date that he removed to Bradenham House, in Buckinghamshire, which he rented on a long lease, and where he died in 1848. There is a monument to his memory at Bradenham. The ancient manor of Bradenham belonged in the thirteenth century to the Earls of Warwick, and afterwards to the Lords Windsor. It was subsequently owned by the Lords Wenlock, but was purchased in 1787 by Mr John Hicks, from whom it has descended to the Rev. John Graves, the present owner.

a few days before his death, that he was born in the Adelphi, where his father took up his abode, on his marriage, with his books scattered around, so that literally he was "born in a library." According to "Lodge's Peerage," he was born on the 21st of December, 1805, being the eldest of a family of four children—three sons and one daughter.

Mr. Picciotto* states, that he was born in December, 1804, and that he was, at the usual age of eight days, initiated into the covenant of Abraham by the hands of a relative of his mother, the late David Abarbanel Lindo, a Spanish and Portuguese merchant of high standing. But though reared, nominally at least, in the Jewish faith from infancy, he did not long remain a Jew. His father for many years had adopted very lax principles, and was still more lax in the practice of his religion; and after being fined by his synagogue in Bevis Marks for non-acceptance of some duty in connection with that institution, he "broke" with its ministers, and severed the ties which bound him to the creed. It would seem to be a matter of course that his children should be absorbed into the dominant Church; and accordingly it was resolved—it is said at the suggestion of Samuel Rogers—that young Benjamin should profess himself a Christian.

According to another account, he was born at his grandfather's house at Enfield Chase. The author of a recently published "Life of the Earl of Beaconsfield," writes: "For the sake of consulting

* "Sketches of Anglo-Jewish History." Trübner & Co.

the books in the British Museum Isaac D'Israeli occupied a pleasant house in the Upper Street, Islington, near the fields at Highbury, and overlooking other fields, through which the New River wound at Canonbury, with the famous Canonbury Tower, where Goldsmith and other noted men lodged occasionally, nearly opposite. The house still exists, facing Canonbury Lane, but, like all the other houses on the terrace, had long ago a shop front added, and is now undistinguished in the busy street. Here, on the 21st of December, 1805,* Benjamin Disraeli was born." The writer adds that it has been stated that he was christened a few weeks afterwards at St. Andrew's, Holborn, but this is false; the baptismal ceremony did not take place till some years later. The entry of the baptism in the Register of St. Andrew's—in a certain way a "Curiosity of Literature"—runs thus:—"Baptized, July 31, 1817, Benjamin—said to be about twelve years old—son of Isaac and Maria D'Israeli, of King's Road, gentleman." The baptism was administered by a clergyman named Thimbleby.

Lord Beaconsfield's sister, Sarah, was born in December, 1802, and appears to have been her father's kind of faithful attendant in his blindness. She lived in Ailsa Park Villas, Twickenham, and was betrothed to a Mr. Meredith, a gentleman of wealth, of literary repute as the patron of Thomas

* As the writer fixes on 1805, and not 1804, as the year of Lord Beaconsfield's birth, his statement must not be accepted as unquestioned. See note on p. 18.

Taylor, the translator of Aristotle. She died in December, 1859, and is buried in the Willesden Cemetery. His next brother, James, was appointed by Mr. D'Israeli to a Commissionership of Inland Revenue, and died in 1868. His youngest brother, Ralph, thanks to his illustrious brother's influence, is Deputy Clerk of the Parliaments. It may be added that Sarah D'Israeli accompanied her brother in one, at least, of his Eastern tours, and that strong traces of her influence may be traced in his "Alroy."

A great part of the childhood of Benjamin D'Israeli was spent at Enfield, where his father resided in the house already mentioned as having been occupied by his grandfather before him.

His acceptance of the faith of the Church of England, however, does not seem to have been more than skin deep, for he was sent by his father to a certain Rev. Dr. Cogan,* a Unitarian minister at Walthamstow. One of his schoolfellows still living tells me that as a boy young D'Israeli was not remarkable for his attention to his lessons, or for his fondness for classical or mathematical studies; but that he was a great dandy, and also a devourer of curious and out-of-the-way literature, old romances, plays, and histories; and that he would often keep the other boys awake at night by telling them all sorts of stories, which he would invent as he went along. "The child," in his case, "was the father of the man." He was shy and reserved, and would wander by himself in the glades of the forest hard

* This Dr. Cogan is said to have been highly commended by Dr. Parr on the score of his classical attainments.

by, his only companion being a book, and his master's favourite dog. His holidays were doubtless divided between his father's house in Bloomsbury, and his grandfather's villa at Enfield.

He is said to have had Mr. Milner Gibson among his schoolfellows at the suburban academy at Walthamstow. He never went to either of our great Universities, and the knowledge which he picked up at school was fragmentary and out of the beaten path, though naturally it was subsequently enriched by continental travel.

It is remarkable that into both of his early novels he interwove a school-fight, in which an oppressed boy rises against his oppressor, and gains his revenge. Is it possible, or rather is it not probable that this sketch was so far autobiographical, and that he fought his way among the boys at Walthamstow, having found the finger of scorn pointed at him on account of his Jewish origin?

It has been well remarked that his father's library and London society were the first real schools through which young D'Israeli passed; for he soon forgot even the little classics that he picked up at Walthamstow, and the few months which he spent on a stool in a lawyer's office served only to initiate him into a little practical routine, which he despised. At the first sight it may seem that this want of a regular education was a defect, and stood in his way; but in reality such was not the case; for he set to work to educate himself, and that after all is the best of all education.

When about sixteen or seventeen he was placed

with Messrs. Swan, Stevens & Co., solicitors, of Old Jewry, to be instituted in the mysteries of legal drafts and conveyances; but he never liked the drudgery of the quill, or the routine of a lawyer's office.* Whilst serving his time here, he used often to spend his Sundays with the family of the late Mr. William Jacob, sometime M.P. for Rye, who lived at Stoke Newington.

It is not known how he became acquainted with the Austen family; it is certain that they were intimate friends of his father. "The Austens," writes Mr. D'Israeli's biographer in the "Imperial Dictionary of Universal Biography," "were acquainted with many of the minor officials of the day; and Mr. Austen figures in the memoirs of Mr. Ward, the author of 'Tremaine,' as one of his most cherished correspondents. To this connection Mr. D'Israeli perhaps owed an early familiarity with gossip, political and social, which was strictly banished from the studious seclusion in which his father devoted himself to a purely literary life."

* Another account says that he was articled to Mr. Austen, a solicitor in Montague Place, near the British Museum. But this is a fiction.

CHAPTER II.

He enters into Fashionable Life—Lady Blessington's House—He edits the *Star Chamber*—Publishes *Vivian Grey*—He makes a Foreign Tour—Visits the East—Publishes a Poem and Novel.

BESIDES listening to the stories, political or otherwise, of Mr. Austen's large circle of acquaintances, many of whom regularly gossipped over the doings of parliamentary speakers, cabinet ministers, and others, young Disraeli soon gained the right of *entrée* to the more fashionable and aristocratic circles at the West End, including the memorable gatherings which took place under the roof of the charming Countess of Blessington. Here he met Prince Louis Napoleon, then in exile, Mr. E. Lytton Bulwer, and Lord Lyndhurst.

"Many years ago," writes Mr. R. R. Madden, in his biography of the Countess of Blessington, "I frequently met Mr. D'Israeli at Lady Blessington's abode in Seamore Place. It needed no spirit from the grave, or rapping spirit from the invisible world, to predict even then the success of the young D'Israeli in public life. Though in general society he was usually silent or reserved, he was closely observant of all that passed around him. It required generally a subject of more than common interest to produce the fitting degree of enthusiasm in order to animate him, and to stimulate him into the exer-

cise of his marvellous powers of conversation. When duly excited, however, his command of language was wonderful ; his power of sarcasm unsurpassed ; the readiness of his wit, the quickness of his perception, the grasp of his mind, that enabled him to seize on all the points of any subject under discussion, only persons would call in question who had never been in his company at the period I refer to."

By the general consent of his contemporaries, Benjamin D'Israeli, as a boy and a youth, was certainly very handsome. "He had," writes Mr. Brandes, "long raven-black locks, a good nose, a mouth round which there was a restless, nervous play ; and a complexion striking for its romantic paleness. He was everywhere found attractive, and was often petted by both men and women. Men were delighted with his shrewd questions and witty replies ; and from women he seems to have easily learnt what he said in his first book, when scarcely twenty years of age, that the only rival which a clever man has to fear, is a precocious boy."

Mr. T. P. O'Connor writes, in his "Lord Beaconsfield, a Biography :"—"According to unanimous contemporary testimony, he was singularly handsome. He had long raven locks, eyes bright with intelligence and vivacity, a regular nose, and a complexion of ultra-romantic pallor. . . . There are traditions of his having out-dandied even the leaders of that age of dandies. We hear of coats of velvet and strange cuts, flashing rings, and interminable

chains, tasselled canes, and such like extravagances."

Those of his cotemporaries who used to meet him at Lady Blessington's *soirées* enlarge, in slightly altered terms, on these outward signs of internal and essential dandyism. They enlarge on his gorgeous waistcoats, the fringes of black silk round his wrists, and the abundance of gold chains that hung about his neck and his pockets. But it must not be forgotten that George IV. was still on the throne, and the dandies of the Regency were not then an extinct race. D'Israeli was probably the youngest and the last of them. He is described at that time as having been shy, silent, and reserved in society; but still he was always observant, always "on the look-out" for information, for "subjects," and scenes which he could portray with his versatile pen or embody in his next novel.

"In his early youth, then," writes Mr. Brandes "D'Israeli adopted the tone of the fashionable world; in society he was often silent; but he was in the highest degree attractive when he told stories. He could use both flattery and banter, be cold and devoted at the right time and place; he could touch lightly on important subjects, and talk with humorous importance on trifles; and, to judge from his books, he has penetrated as deeply into the mysteries of epicurean art as into that of the tailor."

"D'Israeli," writes Mr. N. P. Willis, "is one of the most remarkable faces that I ever saw. He is lividly pale, and, but for the energy of his action

and the strength of his lungs, would seem a victim to consumption. His eyes are as black as Erebus, and he has the most mocking and lying-in-wait sort of expression conceivable. His mouth is alive with a kind of working and impatient nervousness; and when he has burst forth, as he does constantly, with a particularly successful cataract of expression, it assumes a curl of triumphant scorn that would be worthy of Mephistopheles. His hair is as extraordinary as his taste in waiscoats. A thick heavy mass of jet-black ringlets falls over his left cheek almost to his collarless stock, whilst on the right temple it is parted and put away with the smooth carefulness of a girl's." Verily in his case "the child was the father of the man." It must not be forgotten, however, that foppery and dandyism were but very common even with young men in the days of George IV., which really were little different from those of the Regency. About this time Mr. D'Israeli was portrayed in an idealized outline by A. E. Chalon, and was also sketched by Maclise.

But with all his "foppery," it is clear that the future Lord Beaconsfield at that time possessed intellectual powers of far higher calibre than was owned by the majority of "dandies," who, at that time, were wont to air themselves in Pall Mall or Hyde Park.

Mr. Crabb Robinson records in his "Diary" (vol. iii. p. 110) having met "young D'Israeli," adding that his conversation interested and pleased him. "He talked with spirit of German literature.

He spoke of Landor's satire as having no satire in it. The chat was an amusing one."

Early in the year 1826, the late Mr. John Murray, of Albemarle Street, started his short-lived Tory paper, *The Representative*, on which it is said that he lost from £10,000 to £15,000 in a few weeks. "It was expected," says Mr. Trench, in his "Notes from Past Life," "to become the great Tory wonder of the age, but these great expectations were suddenly blighted." How far this was the result of, or happened in spite of, its editorial management, we are not in a position to say. Mr. Trench describes it as "excelling the other papers in nothing but a few feet more of leading article, in which colonization is laid down as the great resource for Ireland."

It has, indeed, been asserted and repeated again and again in various places, that young D'Israeli was either the editor of, or a leading contributor to, the above-mentioned journal, a crude and flippant evening paper, under the auspices, it is said, of John Gibson Lockhart, but which expired at the end of about six months. The assertion was first made by the *Edinburgh Review*, and rests ultimately on the authority of Lord Brougham; but the statement is utterly untrue; as shown by the positive declaration of Lord Beaconsfield towards the end of his life in the columns of the *Athenæum*.

There is more truth in the report which connects him as a writer, with the *Star Chamber*, a still more ephemeral weekly paper, which lived only from April to June of that year. This journal

had a very limited circulation, and only a single copy of its file is known to exist—namely, on the shelves of the *British Museum*. On a memorable occasion, in after life, namely in 1853, Mr. D'Israeli declared in the House of Commons that he was himself “a gentleman of the press, and wore no other escutcheon.” In uttering these words he probably was referring to the *Star Chamber*, though he never publicly acknowledged it. The paper, it should be added, was a venture of Mr. Colburn, and was printed and published by a Mr. Marsh, of Oxford Street. It ran to only nine numbers.

Mr. Hitchman, in his “Life of Lord Beaconsfield,” ascribes to Mr. D'Israeli a poem which ran through several of its numbers, entitled “The Dunciad of To-day,” adding “It is not a little interesting to note how completely time has endorsed the judgment of the youthful follower of Pope and Dryden.”

But it was not so much for the work of a journalist as for that of a novelist that he laid himself out from the first. For more than a year before its publication he worked steadily at “Vivian Grey,” his first “venture” in the field of literature. The first part of it appeared in 1826, in three volumes; the second part, or sequel, in two volumes, in 1827. The work bore on its title-page the well-known motto,

“Why then the world's my oyster,
Which I with sword will open.”

It was a sketch, largely autobiographical, but

full of talent; and though it took the town by storm, it failed to please or satisfy its author in his maturer years, who often—perhaps always—spoke of it as the product of his boyhood, and full of faults. Be this as it may, at all events, it was so much admired that “keys” to its characters were published then, just as we have had more recently “keys” to “Lothair” and “Endymion;” one of these “keys” reached several editions. One thing, at all events, it did; it introduced its author at once into the highest literary circles, though doubtless that was not difficult for the son of Isaac D’Israeli to achieve; and he became a lion of the day. He “awoke one day and found himself famous.”

The hero of the story—represented as the son of an eminent and wealthy author, and as one who, without having received any particular education, masters by his own unaided exertion all the arts and sciences, and resolves to go forth and make himself famous and become a great statesman—it need now scarcely be told was none other than the author himself. “Mankind is my great game,” exclaims Vivian Grey; “at this moment how many a powerful noble wants only wit to be a Minister, and what wants Vivian Grey to obtain the same end? Shall I, because my birth baulks my fancy, shall I pass my life a moping misanthrope? Now let me probe my very soul. Does my cheek blanch? I have the mind for the conception, and I can perform right skilfully upon the most splendid of musical instruments, the human voice, to make

these conceptions believed by others. There wants but one thing more—courage, pure faithful courage; and does Vivian Grey know fear? He laughed an answer of bitterest derision."

Mr. Cyrus Redding, in his "Fifty Years' Recollections," in writing of "Vivian Grey," remarks that "its characters were supposed to be drawn from real life. At least, it was clearly implied that, though the author did not intend to depict Lord A. or Lady B., yet he drew his outlines from those seen in the fashionable circles. There could be no question that pretensions to virtue and character were more falsely or more successfully lacquered fashion than at that moment. There was room and verge enough for the author's fancy to work and find doubles in real life, but then why pretend otherwise? But 'Vivian Grey' did not appear alone. Authors and publishers were in those days much more a unity than they are now. It was at the time Mr. Disraeli, *incog.*, was publishing a periodical paper called the *Star Chamber*, of which the public took little notice, that the two first volumes of 'Vivian Grey' made their appearance. The *Star Chamber* was personal. "I have heard," adds Mr. Redding, "that the author suppressed it, but not till it had attacked most of the literary men of the day. I forget all else about its contents. Mr. D'Israeli reviewed and extolled his own book in its columns. Calling one day upon Colburn, who published 'Vivian Grey,' he said to me: 'I have a capital book out, "Vivian Grey:" the authorship is a great secret—a man of high fashion—very high—

keeps the first society. I can assure you it is a most piquant and spirited work, quite sparkling! Colburn always regarded, in publishing, the fashionable taste, no matter how absurd, for the fashionable was a buying taste, and no Lintot looks farther. I remarked that the characters were not drawn from life, for I had already run my eyes over the work. 'Two or three characters might,' I said, 'be from the life, but they were exaggerated, or almost wholly imaginary.' This Colburn did not like, but remarked that people of fashion might read, and would understand them for realities. Three or four days after this, walking down Oxford Street, I saw one of Colburn's establishment come out of the shop of Marsh, D'Israeli's publisher of the *Star Chamber*. He had a number of pamphlets under his arm. 'What have you there?' The pamphlets were in yellow covers, about twenty pages of matter. The word 'key' was signified by a woodcut of a key, and below the cut were the words 'to Vivian Grey!' being a complete exposition of the royal, noble, and fashionable characters who figure in this most extraordinary work.' There was a second woodcut of a curtain, partly drawn aside, displaying in the perspective a drawing-room filled with company attitudinizing. 'Oh,' said I, 'why did not Mr. Colburn publish this as well as the book itself?' 'That would not answer,' was the reply. I did not on the instant remember that Marsh was the publisher of Mr. D'Israeli's *Star Chamber*. I took away one of the pamphlets, and found it filled with

extracts from 'Vivian Grey,' and remarks, some of feigned censure, to give critical verisimilitude; others were puffs of the work, highly laudatory. At the end of the key there was a clue to living personages, whose names were affixed to the real and imaginary characters in the work, all extracted from Mr. D'Israeli's *Star Chamber*, which affected great mystery as to the authorship, the aim of which was obvious. 'We know,' so it ran, 'who the author of "Vivian Grey" really is.'

The author of the "Life of Lord Beaconsfield," above quoted, in noticing the publication of "Vivian Grey," observes:—"That the writer indulged in an imaginary autobiography is tolerably clear. The hero, the son of an eminent author, devoted to books and utterly indifferent to politics and newspapers, might as well have been named Benjamin D'Israeli as Vivian Grey, for the external identity was so far complete. How far the two coincided in views of political morality we cannot venture to define. But a brilliant audacity stretched far beyond, and sketched political influence and social honours which the author appeared to consider not only as probable, but certain. One of the characters bears a title which had then no existence, but which, nearly fifty years afterwards, became a reality—the Earl of Beaconsfield, the selected title of the statesman who had risen to be Prime Minister of England, but who, when he first invented it, was an almost unknown young author looking for a publisher."

When writing for the *Star Chamber* the subject

of this memoir was a strong and powerful advocate of Toryism ; but a little later, when he had seen more of the world and learnt more of its ways, he appears to have mixed up with it a "vague Radicalism," in which he found scope for his imagination and taste for theorizing. "He began to regard Parliamentary life," writes one of his biographers, "as a profession worthy of his abilities, and circumstances appeared to favour the probability of his entering the House of Commons."

The following account of a scene at the outset of Lord Beaconsfield's public life is particularly interesting ; it was penned a few years ago, and is evidently the production of one who was present on the occasion referred to :—"When Mr. D'Israeli launched his first tale and found it to be a great success, Lord Lytton, then Mr. Edward Lytton Bulwer, had achieved the proud place as a novelist which he has ever since retained. The aspirant for literary distinction had long admired at a distance the renown of his senior, and encouraged by the reception which his own maiden effort had received, he did what young authors under similar circumstances are apt to do. He sent to Mr. Bulwer a copy of 'Vivian Grey,' writing, at the same time, an apologetic note, and giving reasons for the liberty he had taken. The letter, with its accompanying gift, were at once acknowledged, and Mr. D'Israeli was requested to name a day for dining with their recipient. It happened that Mr. D'Israeli had arranged for quitting England on the day but one after receiving this invitation. He wrote to say

so, and the morrow was fixed for the symposium. Four gentlemen sat down at Mr. Bulwer's table on that occasion—one being, of course, the host; another, Mr. D'Israeli; the third, a man, shy, but evidently intelligent, for though he said comparatively little, his remarks, as often as he hazarded them, were keenly to the purpose. The fourth, a private friend of the host, need not be specified. It was an evening not to be forgotten, because then, as now, both Lord Lytton and Mr. D'Israeli shone in conversation. The party broke up about midnight, and the host and his friend were left alone together. After discussing D'Israeli, the question was put, 'Who is your silent guest?' 'He is one of the ablest men I know,' was the reply. 'He was my contemporary at college. He is now a barrister; and, mark my words, he will attain the highest honours of his profession. His name is Cockburn.' The climax to this little bit of domestic history or gossip is very remarkable. The two brilliant novelists and the painstaking lawyer who dined together some forty or more years ago, comparatively obscure men, have all risen to positions of eminence in the State. Mr. Cockburn is Lord Chief Justice of England; Mr. Bulwer, after serving as Secretary of State for the Colonies, has become a peer of the realm; and Mr. D'Israeli, on more than one previous occasion Chancellor of the Exchequer and leader of the House of Commons, is now First Lord of the Treasury. So much for the practical working of a Constitution which Mr. Bright denounces as repressive of merit, and Mr. Gladstone,

forgetful of what it has done for himself, seeks to overthrow."

It is clear from "Vivian Grey" that he had seen already something of at least one foreign country; but he now resolved to make a more extended tour, and to visit the East, in which, as the ancient cradle of his race, he could not fail to take a lively interest. Accordingly he set out, accompanied by his sister Sarah and her betrothed, a Mr. Meredith, and visited Constantinople, Albania, the Plains of Troy, Syria, Palestine and Egypt, returning by way of Italy and Spain. At Jerusalem he tried to make his way into the sacred Mosque of Omar, and had a narrow escape of suffering severely at the hands of the Mussulmen for violating their sanctuary.

If we may believe a statement in the *Court Journal*, this journey to the East was caused by other and less romantic motives; for it states that Mr. D'Israeli had involved himself for Prince Louis Napoleon (afterwards Emperor of the French) to such a degree that it became necessary for one or the other to leave England, and that Mr. D'Israeli, with designs upon some constituency, consented, for the sake of his friend, to forego his cherished projects. He went abroad—first to Rome, and then to Palestine—and to this enforced tour we owe "Tancred."

Before starting on his Eastern tour, he published a brief satirical squib on English society and its ways (somewhat after the style of Gulliver), under the title of "The Voyage of Captain Popenilla." This work, however, though well received and very

brilliant, has been almost forgotten. Not so his "Revolutionary Epic," which he commenced, as he tells us, on the Plains of Troy; a poem most unfortunately named, for so far from gilding Revolution, it fancifully sings the praises of the feudal and aristocratic principle, and exposes the absurdity of the French dream about "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity." Three books of this epic only were completed at the time; and the work was never resumed. As Mr. Hitchman justly remarks, "Modern politics do not fit in with sounding blank verse; and the denunciations of the Theory of Equality or of the Radicalism of 1830, however well deserved, read better in prose than in poetry."

But, whatever may have been the motive which dictated this temporary exile, Mr. D'Israeli returned from the East in 1831, bringing home with him those vivid impressions of Oriental life of which he made so much use in several of his novels; and he afterwards became a tolerably frequent contributor to the "Annuals" in their palmy days. Several of his shorter poetical trifles, written about this time, are given in full in Mr. Hitchman's biography of Lord Beaconsfield mentioned above. The latest—some lines addressed to Lady Mahon—bear date 1839.

Mr. Hitchman ascribes to Mr. D'Israeli, from internal evidence, a large share in another work, "England and France, or a cure for Ministerial Gallo-Mania," which was published by Murray in 1832. The book, however, never was acknowledged by Lord Beaconsfield in his lifetime; but it is set

down as his in the "London Catalogue of Books." As its title implies, it is "a protest against the affection of the Whigs for France and things French, and is especially interesting as embodying a trustworthy account of the Revolution of 1830."

But it is not only in his Epic that the effects of his Eastern tour were discernible. That tour led to the publication of three novels: "The Young Duke," "Contarini Fleming," and "Alroy."

CHAPTER III.

Returns to England—Stands twice for Wycombe—Addresses the Electors of Marylebone—Publishes “What is He?” and his “Vindication of the English Constitution.

It is almost impossible to say whether Mr. D’Israeli was fortunate or unfortunate in having been absent from this country during those exciting times when controversy ran at its highest respecting the “Catholic Claims,” and “the Test and Corporation Act,” and “Reform.” Had he been in England, it is scarcely possible to conceive his active mind and susceptible feelings not having been influenced strongly in the one direction or the other when such stakes were being played for in the Parliamentary arena. As matters were, perhaps, he was able to take a more true and more independent view of both those struggles; for outsiders often see more of the game and the battle than those who are engaged in playing it; and it is not very easy to decide whether his strong democratic or his equally strong aristocratic sympathies would have ultimately prevailed. Be this, however, as it may, he returned to England from his foreign tour in the early spring of 1832, just in time to see the “beginning of the end” of the Reform agitation, and to take a part in one of the last, if not the very last, of election contests that were waged

under the old system. In June, 1832, he offered himself, on the occurrence of a casual vacancy, to the electors of Chipping Wycombe, a borough not very far distant from his father's newly-acquired home at Bradenham. His political creed, to judge by his own manifesto, must be owned to have been somewhat enigmatical; in his hatred of the Whigs he was equally disposed to accept the aid of both extremes—the Tories on the one side, and the Radicals on the other; and probably it will not be unjust or inaccurate to say that he came forward as a "Tory-Radical," a man who hated one, and slightly scorned both, of the political parties, desiring to merge them both in a "great national party" which should rise superior to them both, and "could alone save the country from impending destruction."

His opponent at Wycombe, both in June and again in the following November, was the Hon. Charles Grey, a younger son of the Prime Minister, an amiable and excellent man, and personally most popular both at Court and in society. But it was not in accordance with Mr. D'Israeli's ideas to allow the representation of a constituency which he could awake to a sense of its duties to send up to St. Stephen's a mere scion of one of the "governing families," even though the head of that family was the Premier himself.

Proposed by a Tory, and seconded by a Radical, he declared that he came forward as an Independent candidate, and wearing the badge of no party. To use Mr. Hitchman's words, "Reform

had come, but he did not consider the alteration of the franchise by any means a final step. He hoped to see arising from it financial, ecclesiastical, and legal reforms. For these he was ready, and even anxious to work. Far before such things, however, he placed the amelioration of the condition of the poor. He wanted to see the labourer better fed, better clothed, better housed, and better taught; and he was alive to the fact that, unless the condition of this class were improved, a social convulsion was impending, which might end in the destruction of our national life. . . . His principle was, that the happiness of the many must be preferred to the happiness of the few; and he did not think it necessary, not belonging to the tail of a faction, but being sprung from the people, and having none of the blood of the Plantagenets and Tudors in his veins, to be more specific. . . . It had been alleged against him that he was supported by the Tories. He was, and he rejoiced in the fact. . . . He was glad to find the Tories for once on the side of the people, and he hoped the alliance would be lasting."

It is only right to add that Mr. D'Israeli's candidature on this occasion was backed up by the personal introduction of Mr. E. Bulwer Lytton, then the Radical M.P. for St. Ives, and, at his suggestion, by Mr. O'Connell and Joseph Hume, the latter of whom, however, withdrew his recommendation when he found that Colonel Grey had declared himself as a candidate, not wishing apparently to divide the Liberal party. The strange union of the

Tory and the Radical elements in Mr. D'Israeli no doubt puzzled his friends and supporters, and they regarded him as a chameleon, which seems to be of a different colour in different lights. A man who acts on higher principles than the mere party moves of his neighbours, must be content to be misunderstood and misinterpreted.

At the time of which we write the right of voting had not been extended beyond the clique of aldermen and municipal authorities, in whose hands the suffrage then lay; the result of the poll at the close being—Grey, 23; D'Israeli, 12. Several members of the petty oligarchy, apparently puzzled and mystified, did not vote at all.

Towards the end of the year came the first general election after the passing of the Reform Bill. A new constituency had been formed, consisting of the £10 householders. The same candidates came forward; the same principles were once more enunciated; and the independent "Tory Radical" candidate once more suffered a defeat. The old members were once more returned; the poll standing thus:

The Hon. Robert J. Smith	. . .	179
The Hon. C. Grey	140
Mr. D'Israeli	119

About this time Mr. D'Israeli appears to have been elected a member of the newly-established Westminster Club, being proposed by Mr. E. Lytton Bulwer; but he declined to belong to it, and withdrew his name, having, however, paid his entrance fee, out of a wish not to do anything that might

even appear to be "shabby." As this club was mainly composed of Radicals and Liberals, his brief membership was thrown somewhat unjustly in his teeth on the hustings at Taunton and elsewhere.

According to Mr. Hitchman, in his work already referred to, all Mr. D'Israeli's speeches, about this period, were protests against the nomination system by which the Whigs were getting the borough representation entirely into their own hands; and he maintained that "the Tory is the only real democratic party, inasmuch as it surrounds the people with the power of the throne, and protects them against a tyrannical aristocracy." In fact, the key to his career from first to last was his utter and unscrupulous hatred of the Whigs as a party. The aim of his life was to "dish" the Whigs.

In explanation of Mr. D'Israeli's apparent sympathy with the Radicals during the early portion of his public career, the following extract from his letter published in the *Times* in answer to the *Globe* may be placed on record here:—

"It may be asked, why did I not join the Tories? Because (in 1832) I found the Tories in a state of ignorant stupefaction. The Whigs had assured them that they were annihilated, and they believed them. They had not a single definite and intelligible idea as to their position and their duties, or the character of their party. They were haunted with a nervous apprehension of that great bugbear, the people. . . . They were ignorant that the millions of the nation require to be guided and

encouraged, and that they were the nation's natural leaders, bound to marshal and enlighten them. . . . The Tories in 1832 were no longer a practical party; they had no system and no object; they were passive and forlorn."

Thus early had Mr. D'Israeli conceived the idea of "educating" his party, and so thoroughly was he, at the time of the first Reform Bill, the same in character and in principles with the Chancellor of the Exchequer under Lord Derby, and with himself as Prime Minister of England.

In the April of 1833, on the retirement of Mr. E. B. Portman, Mr. D'Israeli issued to the electors of Marylebone an address, which on the whole was very much the same as that which he had made on the hustings at Wycombe, though the Radical side of his opinions was slightly more emphasized, as he dwelt on the need of triennial Parliaments and the ballot; and Mr. D'Israeli reminds his assailants, as we learn from history, it is to the Whigs of a century and a half ago we owe the Septennial Act; and that he looks to those two measures as needful to "invest the people with what once was their birthright, and with security" to use it. At the same time, he urged the propriety of a land-tax; he did not, however, follow up this address by an appearance on the hustings: and his views on the necessity of a land-tax he soon saw reason to abandon.

In this year Mr. D'Israeli published a pamphlet, entitled "What is He?"—an expansion of his speech delivered at Wycombe—in which he severely

caricatured the Ministry of Lord Melbourne. The picture of the Cabinet, under the similitude of six horses ridden by Ducrow, then at the height of his fame as a circus-rider, while Lord Brougham plays the part of clown, has never been outdone, except perhaps by Mr. D'Israeli himself, in the way of hustings extravaganzas :—

“ *The Reform Ministry.*—The Reform Ministry ! I dare say now some of you have heard of M. Ducrow, that celebrated gentleman who rides on six horses. What a prodigious achievement ! It seems impossible, but you have confidence in Ducrow. You fly to witness it : unfortunately one of the horses is ill, and a donkey is substituted in its place. But Ducrow is still admirable : there he is, bounding along in spangled jacket and cork slippers ! The whole town is mad to see Ducrow riding at the same time on six horses ; but now two more of the steeds are seized with the staggers, and lo ! three jackasses in their stead ! Still Ducrow persists, and still announces to the public that he will ride round his circus every night on his six steeds. At last all the horses are knocked up, and now there are half-a-dozen donkeys. What a change ! Behold the hero in the amphitheatre, the spangled jacket thrown on one side, the cork slippers on the other. Puffing, panting, and perspiring, he pokes one sullen brute, thwacks another, cuffs a third, and curses a fourth, while one brays to the audience, and another rolls in the sawdust. Behold the late Prime Minister and the Reform Ministry ! The spirited and snow-white steeds have gradually

changed into an equal number of sullen and obstinate donkeys, while Mr. Merryman, who, like the Lord Chancellor, was once the very life of the ring, now lies his despairing length in the middle of the stage, with his jokes exhausted and his bottle empty."

In the course of the next year (1834), his opinions would appear to have undergone a decided change with respect to this subject, and the agricultural interest; for in November of that year he helped to draw up an address from the Buckinghamshire farmers to the Legislature, on the distressed state of the agricultural interest, and at a dinner to Lord Chandos in the following month he enforced his views in eloquent terms. "No nation," he said, "could ever do without agriculture, and the peasantry attached to it; and as for the manufacturers of Birmingham or Manchester, they would, if it suited them, at any time migrate to Belgium, France, or Egypt. The agriculturists had a spirit of patriotism; they had, on their side, wealth and intelligence, and all the aristocracy of the country."

During this year Mr. D'Israeli appears to have become especially intimate with Lord Lyndhurst, whom he had met more than once, when quite a young man, at Lady Blessington's gatherings, and who was struck by his promise of future celebrity. He was a constant guest at Lord Lyndhurst's house in George Street, Hanover Square, and was frequently his companion in his walks and strolls around Pall Mall and the parks. To him he dedicated his "*Vindication of the English Constitution*,"

and Lord Lyndhurst was the "noble and learned lord" to whom the work was nominally addressed. But in reality it was a manifesto addressed to all the educated and reflecting minds of the age; it was an attempt to show by an appeal to history, that the hereditary principle is not confined to the House of Peers, but underlies the entire machinery of the State, and that the landed aristocracy are the true champions of national rights as against the tyranny of the mob or the people. He asserts the great value and wisdom of the works of Lord Bolingbroke as a storehouse of practical wisdom, most useful for all statesmen to study, and asserts that Pitt was in reality his pupil. "In the earlier days of his character," writes Mr. D'Israeli, "Lord Bolingbroke meditated over the formation of a new party—that dream of youthful ambition in a perplexed and discordant age, but destined in English politics to be never more substantial than a vision. More experienced in political life," he continues, "Lord Bolingbroke became aware that he had only to choose between the Whigs and the Tories, and his sagacious intellect, not satisfied with the superficial character of these . . . divisions, penetrated their interior and essential qualities, and discovered, in spite of all the affectation of popular sympathy on the one side, and of admiration of arbitrary power on the other, that his choice was, in fact, a choice between oligarchy and democracy. From the moment that Lord Bolingbroke, in becoming a Tory, embraced the national cause, he devoted himself absolutely to his party; all the

energies of his Protean mind were lavished in their service ; and although restrained from advocating the cause of the nation in the Senate, his inspiring pen made Walpole tremble in the recesses of the Treasury, and in a series of writings unequalled in our literature for their spirited patriotism, their just and profound views, and the golden eloquence in which they are expressed, eradicated from Toryism all those absurd and odious doctrines which Toryism had adventitiously adopted, clearly developed its essential and permanent character, discarded the *jus divinum*, demolished passive obedience, threw to the winds the doctrine of non-resistance, placed the abdication of James and the accession of George on their right basis, and, in the complete reorganization of the public mind, laid the foundation for the future accession of the Tory party to power, and to that popular and triumphant career which must ever await the policy of an Administration inspired by the spirit of our free and ancient institutions.”*

It is impossible not to see in this eloquent and rhetorical peroration the idea which was floating through the writer’s brain—namely, that he hoped to see the Whig and Tory, or rather the Liberal and Conservative parties, hereafter fused into a new party, with aims superior to both, or, if not, that modern Conservatism might be “educated” to throw away that which was accidental to it, and

* In a later page of this pamphlet Mr. D’Israeli expresses his own ideal of the social system as “a free government founded on the broadest basis of popular rights, yet combining with democratic liberty both aristocratic security and monarchical convenience”

take its stand—under the guidance of some future Bolingbroke, perhaps under himself—as the true champion of England's freedom and laws. Was this all a dream? We shall see. If we grant that it was an ambitious and visionary idea, at least it was in a noble ambition that it took birth. That Lord Beaconsfield did not abandon one iota of this ambitious dream in 1870 is proved by the Essay prefixed to "*Lothair*," in a re-issue of his novels and tales by Messrs. Longmans. This Essay, though called by him a General Preface, lets the outer world into some part, at least, of the secret springs of his career, both as a statesman and a man of letters; and it enforces and illustrates the leading idea with fresh force and vigour as will be seen presently.

CHAPTER IV.

Lord Lyndhurst recommends him for Lynn—He contests Wycombe a third time—Contests Taunton unsuccessfully—Publishes “Letters by Runnymede”—He publishes “Henrietta Temple” and “Venetia.”

It is clear that even at this time Mr. D’Israeli’s opinions were somewhat unfixed and eccentric, if there be truth in the following extract from the “Greville Memoirs.” Under date of Dec. 6, 1834, we read :—

“The Chancellor (Lyndhurst) called on me yesterday about getting young D’Israeli into Parliament, through the means of George Bentinck, for Lynn. I had told him that George wanted a good man to assist in turning out Lord William Lennox, and he suggested the above-named gentleman, whom he called a friend of Chandos. His political principles, however, must be in abeyance, for he said that Durham was doing all he could to get him the offer of a seat. . . . If, therefore, he is wavering between Chandos and Durham, he must be a mighty impartial personage. I don’t think such a man will do, though just such as Lyndhurst would be connected with.” The notion, however, never seriously entertained, was soon abandoned; for the very next day Mr. Greville writes :—

“George Bentinck sent to Sturges Bourne to know if he would come in for Lynn, but he

declined ; D'Israeli he won't hear of." How far negotiations proceeded with respect to Lynn it is impossible now to discover ; but at all events they fell through utterly and entirely.

At the end of the year, the break-up of the Whig Ministry and the accession of the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel to power caused another general election. The same candidates came forward once more for Wycombe ; and once more with the same result. The poll was declared to be :—

The Hon. Robert Smith . . .	288
Colonel Grey	147
B. D'Israeli	128

But he was not disheartened even at a third defeat in the borough close to his father's residence. On the contrary, he resolved, with undaunted spirit, to make his appeal to a far larger audience, a larger constituency. He republished his speech on the hustings in the form of a pamphlet, with the title of "The Crisis Examined." "Here," observes his biographer, Mr. Hitchman, "the trumpet gives no uncertain sound. It is the voice of a Tory—of a Reformer, if you will, but of a Reformer who works on the old lines of the Constitution, and who accepts the Whigs only as a necessary evil. He is willing to repeal the Malt Tax, because that impost weighs heavily on one interest of the country and leaves the others untouched. He is disposed not so much to 'reform' as to 'improve' the Church of England by abolishing the evils of plurality and

non-residence. With regard to the Irish Church, he declares his willingness to reform, but his determination to maintain her; because experience has taught him that churches are despoiled only for the benefit of the aristocracy. 'I remember Woburn,' he says, 'and I tremble.' He will concede the claims of Dissenters so far as Marriage and Registration are concerned, and he will meet them half-way in the matter of Church rates. At that point, however, he stops. He must maintain the integrity of the Church: he is pledged to do so, and he will."

This was the last occasion on which Mr. D'Israeli solicited the votes of his neighbours and friends at Wycombe. Three or four months later he offered himself for Taunton, in opposition to Mr. H. Labouchere, who had vacated his seat by accepting the Mastership of the Mint under Lord Melbourne's second administration. On this occasion he attacked the Whigs in no measured terms for their "Lichfield House compact" with O'Connell, whom he denounced as an "incendiary" and "traitor"—terms which subsequently caused the great Liberator to style him a "liar," and to assail him in cruel and indefensible terms, not merely as of Jewish origin, but as "the heir-at-law of the blasphemous thief who died upon the cross." As Mr. O'Connell himself had publicly declared that he would never again fight a duel, Mr. D'Israeli sent a challenge—after the fashion of the day—to his son Morgan; but the challenge was declined. To Mr. O'Connell himself he wrote: "I still expect to be a representative of the people before the Repeal of the Union,

We shall meet at Philippi; and rest assured that, confident in a good cause, and some energies that have not been altogether unimproved, I shall seize the first opportunity of inflicting upon you a castigation which will make you at the same time remember and repent the insults you have lavished on Benjamin D'Israeli." How he redeemed this threat will be seen in due course.

In 1835 Mr. D'Israeli writes to the *Times* explaining the somewhat anomalous position which he had taken in the outset of public life:—

"I came forward on that occasion (at Taunton) on precisely the same principles on which I had offered myself at Wycombe; but my situation was different. I was no longer an independent and isolated member of the political world; I had felt it my duty to become an earnest partisan. The Tory party in this interval had aroused itself from its lethargy; it had profited by adversity; it had regained not a little of its original character and primary spirit; it had come to remember, or to discover, that it was the national party of the country; it recognized its duty to place itself at the head of the nation; it possessed the patriotic principles of Sir William Wyndham and Lord Bolingbroke, in whose writings I have always recognized the most pure and the profoundest sources of political and constitutional wisdom; under the guidance of an eloquent and able leader, the principles of primitive Toryism had again developed themselves, and the obsolete associations which form no portion of the great patriotic scheme had been effectually discarded."

“ Under such circumstances,” writes Mr. Hitchman, “ Lord Beaconsfield felt that he could now cordially ally himself with the Tory party, to which, indeed, all his instincts had pointed from the first ; and since he was not fanatically wedded to either Triennial Parliaments or Vote by Ballot, he was perfectly willing to drop them now that the necessity for those nostrums had passed away.”

In the above words lies the whole secret of Mr. D’Israeli’s early career. It is for the reader to approve it or to condemn it.

In 1836, there appeared in the *Times* a series of letters, about thirty in number, under the signature of “ Runnymede.” They were afterwards collected and republished in a volume, but they were never actually owned by Mr. D’Israeli. But there is no doubt as to the pen which wrote them, so full are they of epigram and sparkling wit, and of Mr. D’Israeli’s unmistakable style. They are addressed to Lord Melbourne, Sir Robert Peel, and other public men of the time ; and they dissect the members of the Whig Cabinet with the knife of scorn and contempt, whilst they apostrophize Sir Robert Peel as the “ only hope of a suffering island,” and call on him to act as the saviour and deliverer of the country. These letters made a great sensation at the time, and doubtless helped considerably to destroy the waning prestige of a divided and vacillating Cabinet. Newspaper contributions, when collected and republished, seldom succeed, and these “ Runnymede” letters, when reprinted in a separate form, fell flat and spiritless,

although they were re-published with a dedication to Sir Robert Peel.

To this part of Mr. D'Israeli's career belong two novels which have not yet been mentioned, "Henrietta Temple" and "Venetia." The former published in 1836, and inscribed to Colonel D'Orsay, is an exquisite love story, and one which by itself would have placed its author on a high pinnacle among modern novelists. "Venetia" was issued from the press a year later, and is dedicated to Lord Lyndhurst. It deals not with the most recent phases of English fashionable life, but is an attempt (as Lord Beaconsfield tells us) to shadow forth two of the most renowned and refined spirits that have adorned these our later days—Shelley and Byron. The two novels were attacked with much bitterness in the *Edinburgh Review*, and in other quarters; but in spite of the critics they have retained their popularity.

CHAPTER V.

Is elected for Maidstone—Makes his maiden speech—He marries—He succeeds to Hughenden—Advocates the claims of the Chartists—He publishes “*Sybil*.”

IN June, 1837, the King died, only a month after his niece and heir, the Princess Victoria, had attained her legal majority. The accession of the Queen came as a “god-send” to the feeble Cabinet of Lord Melbourne, who shared, with her Majesty’s uncle, the Duke of Sussex, the Royal confidence. In his hands the young Queen was a strong card, and he resolved to wake up out of his accustomed indolence, and to play his Court hand to advantage. It may be stated here that on the accession of the Queen, Mr. D’Israeli accompanied his friend Lord Lyndhurst to Kensington Palace.

Consequent on the demise of the sovereign is always a General Election; and Parliament having been dissolved in the middle of July, Mr. D’Israeli resolved to try his luck again with another constituency than that of Wycombe.

An opportunity arose just at the right and fitting moment at Maidstone, a borough where the claims of a long purse were (and perhaps still are) held in high esteem, and which had been represented in the now expiring Parliament by a Liberal, Mr. A. W. Roberts, who had become unpopular, and a wealthy Conservative, Mr. Wyndham Lewis, who

lived in the fashionable region of Grosvenor Gate. Under the wing of the last named gentlemen, he resolved to go down to Maidstone and try his luck. He went down, canvassed, and was returned, his opponents being Colonel (afterwards General) T. P. Thompson, and Sir Erskine Perry. The poll stood thus:—

Wyndham Lewis	782
B. D'Israeli	668
Colonel T. P. Thompson	559
T. Erskine Perry	25

Mr. D'Israeli told his constituents on the hustings at Maidstone that he was the first county magistrate in England who had signed a petition against the new Whig Poor Law, on the ground that the relief of the poor was a matter of right,* and not a mere matter of "charity."

Among other quarrels and calamities of the tragicomic kind in which Mr. D'Israeli found himself involved about this time, was a controversial encounter with the editor of the *Globe*. As we read the following sentences, in which the future Premier castigated his opponent, we feel that the language of political controversy has since those days undergone an amelioration which was urgently required:—"The editor of the *Globe* must have a more contracted mind and a paltrier spirit than ever I

* Mr. D'Israeli held that the lands belonging to the monasteries of old were in fact, if not in name, the property of the poor, and that, consequently, if they were alienated for the aggrandizement of the "great families," the duty of maintaining the poor fell on the latter.

imagined, if he can suppose for a moment that an ignoble controversy with an obscure animal like himself can gratify the passion for notoriety of one whose works at least have been translated into the languages of civilized Europe, and circulated by thousands in the New World. It is not merely passion for notoriety that has induced me to tweak the editor of the *Globe* by the nose, and inflict sundry kicks on the baser part of his base body—to make him eat dirt and his own words—fouler than any filth; but because I wished to show to the world what a miserable poltroon, what a craven dullard, what a literary scarecrow, what a mere thing stuffed with straw is the *soi-disant* director of public opinion and official organ of Whig politics.”

Parliament met in November for an autumn session; and Mr. O’Connell having been returned for Dublin, the Liberator and his Tory challenger were now at length destined to “meet at Philippi.” Mr. D’Israeli took his seat in due course, his raven locks and his dandy dress making him one of the most conspicuous among the “new members.”

On the 7th of December he rose to make his maiden speech in St. Stephen’s; and every eye was fixed on him, many even on his own side of the House regarding him with a feeling akin to derision, and looking on him as being little more than an adventurer. The strange dress, figure, and manner of the new member, and the studied extravagance of his diction, convulsed the House with laughter, which at last drowned his voice.

The conclusion of the speech is thus reported in "Hansard":—

"When they recollected the new loves and the old loves, in which so much of passion and recrimination was mixed up between the noble Tityrus of the Treasury and the learned Daphne* of Liskeard (loud laughter), notwithstanding the *amanitium iræ* had resulted, as he had always expected, in the *amoris integratio* (renewed laughter)—notwithstanding that political duel had been fought, in which more than one shot was interchanged, but in which recourse was had to the secure abitrament of blank cartridges (laughter)—notwithstanding emancipated Ireland and enslaved England, the noble lord might wave in one hand the keys of St. Peter, and in the other [the shouts that followed drowned the conclusion of the sentence]. Let them see the philosophical prejudice of man! He was not at all surprised at the reception he had experienced. He had begun several times many things, and he had often succeeded at last. He would sit down now, but the hour would come when they would hear him. [The impatience of the House would not allow the hon. member to finish his speech, and during the greater part of the time the hon. member was on his legs, he was so much interrupted that it was impossible to hear what he said.]"

To think this and to say it next day would have

* All the accounts of this speech ascribe to Mr. D'Israeli the absurdity of alluding to a female character, Daphne. No doubt, as every reader of Virgil's "Eclogues" knows, the rustic pair are "Tityrus and Daphnis."

been nothing. To say so, not so much in the petulance of temper as with the calm earnestness of conviction, at a moment when most men would have been crushed hopelessly under the load of ridicule, and stung beyond power of reflection by the disappointment of cherished hopes, gave evidence of unexampled strength of will and presence of mind, and of the over-weening self-confidence which it went so far to justify. As it did not crush him, it is probable that this first mishap helped him.

The writer of this biography has always believed—and hoped—that one little word at least, in this speech of Mr. D'Israeli on this memorable occasion has been wrongly reported, and that *Hansard* ought to have inserted in the last line a “shall” instead of a mere “will.” The latter word might perhaps be regarded as the mere prophecy of a vain and conceited coxcomb, who believed that a great future was looking before him; while the word “shall,” if it was really used, would indicate the dogged resolve, the proud and chivalrous determination of its utterer that, come what might, he could never rest until he had mastered the unfavourable impression under which he laboured and had “gained the ear of the House.” If so, it would have been at all events in strict keeping with the dictates of his ambitious and fiery spirit, and also with the motto which even then he occasionally used upon his seal, *Forti nihil difficile*.

But to return to our narrative. Though for the moment silenced, Mr. D'Israeli was not extinguished. Only a few days passed before we find

him speaking on the Bill of Sergeant Talfourd to amend the Law of Copyright; and again at its second reading, when he asked that the fruits of literary workers should be secured to the producers, not to the mere consumers—the publishers. In the session after Christmas he spoke briefly in opposition to Mr. C. P. Villiers's annual motion for the Repeal of the Corn Laws, and again still more briefly on going into Committee on the Municipal Corporations of Ireland Bill.

At a public dinner at Maidstone, held at the close of the year, Mr. Disraeli, in responding to the toast of his health, gave the following interesting address, which may throw some light on the above much-debated expression in his maiden speech. Mr. Disraeli said:—"Before you, as my constituents, I appear here this evening to give an account of my stewardship during a Session short indeed, but not uneventful, either to you as members of the British nation or to me as your representative. I can truly say that on no occasion have I been absent from my post. Each night have I been in my seat, and my name has appeared in every division that has taken place during the first session of the first Parliament of the Queen, so far as it has proceeded. It was not my intention to have adverted to anything beyond the regularity of my attendance. I thought it would be arrogance and egotism to allude to any other interference on my part with the business of the House of Commons, but as allusion has been made to it, I will, with your permission, say something on that head, not from

any wish to speak of myself, but because it is due to me and to you, as my constituents, to explain a circumstance unparalleled in the annals of Parliament, and because I should be sorry for you to suppose that your representative, when placed in a situation of unexampled difficulty, had not comported himself in a manner worthy of a man of spirit. Gentlemen, I say at once the circumstances in which I addressed the Speaker were altogether unparalleled. I doubt if anything at all similar to them had ever before occurred. This fault only I find with myself. I was warned of the reception I should meet with, but this only induced me to meet it the sooner. It is part of my constitution to meet menacing danger as soon as possible. I have no idea of shirking a conflict which I know to be inevitable. Yet I had some confidence in the honour of gentlemen. I did not think the moment a new member rose there would be an organized conspiracy to put him down by clamour. I have stood as often as most men of my age before assemblies of the people—adverse assemblies, unwilling audiences, but I always found that which is the boast of Britons—fair play. I ever found that they recognised the justice of our national adage, that ‘fair play is a jewel;’ and least of all did I expect that it would be denied by the *gentlemen* of England. But why do I style them ‘gentlemen’ of England? Oh, no! it was not by them that fair play was denied; for in an assembly, crowded almost beyond parallel, in which nearly 600 members were present, rising at midnight to address the

House, I declare on the honour of a gentleman that a small band of thirty or forty produced all the uproar you have heard of. My voice had not been raised before the insulting jeer arose, and the affected derision was expressed by which they hoped to send me into my seat. But I tell you candidly my thoughts instantly reverted to you, my constituents. Is this, I said to myself, the return for your generous confidence, that the moment I rise an infuriated, Jacobitical, and papistical mob should raise their blatant voices and trample upon me with their deistical hoofs? Shall I yield to them like a child or a poltroon, and resume my seat with pale face and chattering teeth? No such thing, gentlemen. I determined to be on my legs exactly the period I intended my speech should occupy. I succeeded—sometimes in comparative calm; sometimes the cheering of friends joining with the yelling of the foe; sometimes in a scene of tumult unspeakable. But I stood erect, and when I sat down I sent them my defiance. They thought to put me down, but they never shall put me down. Yet, gentlemen, I would not have you suppose for a moment, when I speak thus, that I am deficient in respect for the House. No one feels more deeply than myself what is due to the House of Commons; no one will bend more readily to its opinion or the decision of the Speaker; no one will respect more than myself the wish of its smallest section. I would respect it because I feel the feelings of an individual ought not to be placed in competition with the public time and the public

interests. But there are certain emergencies in which it becomes necessary to show that a man will not be crushed ; and I felt that the circumstances under which so unmanly an attack was made upon me justified me in retaining my position for upwards of twenty minutes, not, I have reason to know, in opposition to the opinion of the Speaker ; not, I have reason to know, in opposition to the feeling of the leading men of all parties. Therefore I could not justify myself in sitting down and acknowledging myself overawed by a small and contemptible mob. For the House of Commons collectively I entertain unbounded respect, and I would bow submissively to the dictum of the Speaker or the vote of any considerable number of its members ; but can I conceal from myself, can any practical man conceal from himself, that there are many members in that House who are beneath contempt ; and, because a small herd of members, whom individually and collectively I despise, congregate like skulking cowards in the remote corners of the House to assail me with disgraceful uproar, was it for your representative, gentlemen, to fall down before them like a craven slave ? No, gentlemen, I expressed what I thought. I told them *the time would come when they would be obliged to listen to me*, and so long as I possess the confidence of my constituents, so long as I meet them with minds so firm, and hearts so sound towards me, believe me I will take care to reduce my promise to practice. I will speak, and they *shall* hear me. They may have prevented me from making a good speech, but they could not

deter me from making a good fight, and I trust I have not disappointed you. I trust I showed, under unparalleled interruption, that I possessed the spirit of a man and the generosity of a combatant who does not hastily lose his temper. If I could not express my feelings as I wished, it was because difficulties at the moment insuperable prevented me. The same party who, on my first entry into this town, met me with calumny—for all the libels circulated against me here' came from London—made their last desperate attempt to baffle me. What did they say at the commencement of the battle? Two prophecies, you will remember, gentlemen, they were foolish enough to hazard on my destiny. The first was that I should never be your member. Here I am. The second was that I should never be heard in the House of Commons. The second prophecy shall prove as false as the first. I baffled them in Maidstone, and will still baffle them in Westminster. We have triumphed in this great constitutional struggle, and we shall yet triumph. . . . When those whom I follow, and the principles which I profess, shall triumph, is in the will of Providence, to which we all must bow; but, as far as human intellect can assist our conjectures, it may safely be predicted that it will be swift, glorious, and signal. Placed in the Senate of my native land by your invitation and your intelligent suffrages, it will probably be my part to share in that magnificent arrangement when the Commons of England give their first vote of confidence to the Conservative Government. I shall

remember under these circumstances those whom I represent. I declare most truly that in the disgraceful hubbub which recently assailed me my thoughts reverted to you, and so long as I am honoured with such marks of your confidence as have been so generously bestowed upon me this evening it will be my proudest boast, my most perfect felicity, never to forget what is due to those who sent me to the great council of the nation."

The election of Mr. Fector as Mr. W. Lewis's successor was followed up by a petition, which confirmed him in his seat. It was the cause, however, of a passage of arms between Mr. D'Israeli and the late Mr. Austin, the celebrated parliamentary counsel, who stated that Mr. D'Israeli at the general election had made pecuniary promises to the voters which he had left unfulfilled. This assertion Mr. D'Israeli denounced as a falsehood, using at the same time expressions for what he was obliged to offer a public apology in a public court of law in the following November.

Mr. D'Israeli was not a frequent speaker during this Session—one which was largely taken up with the arrangements for the Queen's coronation. He was present in the Abbey among the rest of his Parliamentary confrères on that memorable occasion; and probably, whilst most of them were thinking only of the present show, his fancy was straying through those "long-drawn aisles and fretted vaults" as they must have appeared in other days when the Church and Chivalry were the two leading ideas in the minds of educated Englishmen.

His marriage, however, happening at this date, caused a great change in his circumstances and surroundings. He was now the master of a large household at Grosvenor Gate, and could entertain his friends in better style and in far greater numbers than merely in the dining-room of the Carlton and Conservative Clubs. There can be little doubt also that his wife, who was proud of him and devoted to his interests, opened her purse-strings wide in order to help him on his career,—a career which was bounded by no limit except the Premiership. For the story is told that when, as a young man, he was asked what he intended to be, he replied, “Prime Minister of England.”

It will be necessary here to go back a little in our narrative. Mr. Wyndham Lewis had died in 1838, and towards the close of 1839 Mr. D’Israeli had married his widow, a lady of wealth, considerable ability and character, and moving in the best circles of West End society. Her house at Grosvenor Gate was one of the best in point of taste, and one of the most select in its gatherings. This lady, who exercised a great influence on Mr. D’Israeli’s subsequent life, proved a valuable coadjutor to him in the battle of life. Though not by any means poor, yet at the same time, considering his position, Mr. D’Israeli was by no means rich; and up to the time of which we write had been living off and on in modest bachelor apartments in Down Street, Piccadilly.

It may be said, therefore, that in a certain sense, she was one of those who helped him to remove

from Down Street to Downing Street. It was she who helped him and sustained him whilst swimming on the troubled sea of politics, and gave him a home when he most needed it—for Hughenden did not come into his hands until his father's death, seven years later; and after all, if we may believe the Modern Doomsday Book, the rental of Hughenden Manor is not more than £1,494 a year.

With reference to the estate and manor of Hughenden, the following interesting particulars are gleaned from a modern History of Buckinghamshire;—

“Hughenden, or, as it was anciently termed, Hitchenden or Huchendene, was the property of Queen Edith before the Conquest, and after that great epoch in English history it formed part of the possessions of Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, and Nigel, son of Roger de Abliqui or Albini. The Bishop's lands here, and elsewhere, were forfeited, and the manor seems to have remained in the Crown until Henry I. granted it to Geoffrey de Clinton, his chamberlain. This Geoffrey is recorded to have made the Manor of Hitchenden part of the endowment of his Priory at Kenilworth, though in a charter of confirmation of lands, &c., given to this house, King Henry II. enumerates the Church of Hitchenden. The Priors of Kenilworth continued to be Lords of the Manor until the Dissolution. In 1540, King Henry VIII. granted Hughenden Manor and the Rectory to Robert Dormer, and the estate remained in the Dormers until 1709, when it passed in marriage to Philip Stanhope, Earl of

Chesterfield. About 1738 Sir William Stanhope sold the estate to Charles Savage, Esq., who bequeathed it to his brother Samuel, who, dying in 1772, was succeeded by his nephew, John Norris, Esq. He died in 1786, when the Manor descended to Ellen, Countess of Conyngham, niece of C. and S. Savage, and widow of Henry, 1st Earl of Conyngham. From this lady it descended to her nephew, John Norris, Esq., who died in 1845." The late Mr. Isaac D'Israeli purchased the Hughenden House estate in 1847, from the executors of Mr. Norris, and on his death it passed to his son, Mr. Benjamin D'Israeli, as stated above.

Hughenden Manor is described in Kelly's "Post Office Directory" of Buckinghamshire as a handsome mansion, in the Italian style, standing on an eminence in a well-wooded park of about 140 acres, and commanding a fine view of Wycombe Abbey.

Hughenden Church stands but a short distance off from the mansion, and is dedicated to St. Michael and All Angels. It was a Norman structure, and if not originally cruciform, may be described as an irregular building. Having fallen into decay, it was restored and in part rebuilt in 1874-5 by Mr. A. W. Blomfield, architect. The nave, to which a north aisle is annexed, was entirely rebuilt in rough flint with Bathstone dressings. The tower formerly stood in the centre, but has been removed to the north-west corner; the roof is wholly new; the old deal pews have been replaced with oak open seats, and the floor laid

down with encaustic tiles. The chancel is separated from the nave by an open screen of wrought iron. There are several painted windows and brasses, and the churchyard has been carefully levelled and tastefully laid out.

In Lipscombe's "*History of Buckinghamshire*" (1847), Hughenden Church is said to be of "Saxon" architecture. The aisle, or oratory, on the north side of the chancel, was used as the burial-place of the De Montforts; and there are several fine sepulchral slabs and monuments of that family. One, a cross-legged knight, is supposed to represent Henry de Montfort; another represents an individual, probably a priest, in his shroud. Some woodcuts of these monuments are given in Lipscombe's *History*. Some of the windows are semi-circular headed, and the font is large and of semi-Norman workmanship.

In 1839 we find Mr. D'Israeli supporting his old friend "Tom" Duncombe on a motion for allowing theatrical performances in certain theatres in Lent. In the March of that year he again spoke on the same Irish Bill which had called him to his feet in the previous year, and he had the satisfaction of eliciting a cheer from his quondam antagonist, O'Connell. About the same time he spoke in opposition to Mr. Joseph Hume's motion in favour of Household Suffrage, drawing, as his friends thought, a rather fine distinction between the "people" and the "nation." In June he opposed the Government Education Bill, maintaining that the work of instruction was best carried out by

private hands, through the agency of the State Church. This was a subject which lay near to his heart; and he spoke effectively on it, and what was more, he was listened to with respectful attention. His star was in the ascendant.

The year 1839 was marked by an outbreak of Chartism, a socialistic movement largely caused by bad seasons, the absence of work for willing hands, and the diffusion of publications advocating the "rights" of labour. Not only the Ministry and the aristocracy, but even the Queen herself became unpopular, and the country was apparently on the verge of civil war. A body, calling itself the National Convention, elected by the Chartists throughout the kingdom, commenced its sittings in Birmingham in May, 1839. It proposed to the people various means of coercing the Legislature into submission, recommending among other steps, "a run on the savings banks for gold, abstinence from excisable articles, exclusive dealing, and in the last resort, universal cessation from labour." So great had the popular dissatisfaction become that, during the sittings of the Convention, a collision took place with the military at Birmingham. This was soon after followed by open rebellion in other places, notably at Manchester, and, to a still greater extent, at Newport, Monmouthshire, where Mr. John Frost, formerly a magistrate of the place, having marched into the town at the head of a strong body of partisans, made a violent attack on the Westgate Hotel, where the magistrates were sitting. Fire-arms were employed, and ten persons

were killed, and several others wounded ; but in the end the rioters were dispersed, Frost and several others being captured and committed to prison. For taking part in this wild insurrection, three of its leaders were condemned to death, but their punishment was afterwards commuted to transportation. Although he did not, and could not, approve of the means employed by these misguided men, to assert and vindicate their rights, yet Mr. D'Israeli to a great extent endorsed their views ; and when Mr. Attwood brought forward a motion in the House of Commons in their favour, he supported the motion, it has been wittily, but harshly said, "not apparently because he thought the Chartists were right, but because the Ministers, being Whigs, must be wrong." The petition on behalf of the Chartists, which Mr. Attwood presented to the House of Commons, was signed by 1,280,000 persons.

One great aim of the Chartist movement was the extension of political power to the great body of the people, arising in a great measure out of wide-spread national distress and popular disappointment at the results of the Reform Bill.

One of Mr. D'Israeli's novels, "*Sybil*," published at the time, appears to have been written with the view of setting forth his ideas with regard to Chartism and the Chartists, in many of whose aspirations it is clear that its author sympathized ; and it is on record that through the aid of a mutual friend, he was enabled to peruse the entire correspondence between Fergus O'Connor, the leader of the

Chartist body and editor of the *Northern Star*, with the other leaders and agents of the movement. In order to make his novel more individually interesting, he made a tour of observation over a large part of England, visiting the localities in which he intended to lay his scenes, and thus was enabled to see poverty in most of its various phases, and so to draw his pictures from the life.

When, in 1840, Mr. Tom Duncombe and Mr. Wakley brought forward for redress the case of Messrs. Lovett and Collins, who had been convicted of a libel arising out of the Birmingham Chartist Riots, Mr. D'Israeli supported the motion, urging the Conservatives on his own (the Opposition) side of the House not to refuse their support to the motion, because it was brought forward by a Radical. "They, the Opposition, were the natural leaders of the people. Yes," he repeated, "the aristocracy were the natural leaders of the people, for the aristocracy and the labouring population formed the nation; and it was only when gross misconception and factious misrepresentation prevailed that a miserable minority, under the specious designation of popular advocates, was able to prevent the nation's wishes." It is clear, then, that the D'Israeli of 1840 was the same person whom we saw on the hustings at Wycombe in 1832, and that he is very little changed thus far.

Throughout the whole of the discussion which took place regarding the Chartist movement, Mr. D'Israeli spoke strongly in favour of considering this burning question, thus showing that he could

rise superior to party, and that his sympathies were really with the people. He disapproved of the Charter, but he sympathized with the Chartists. "Sooner or later," he said, "whether the Whigs desired it or not, the working classes would demand, and obtain too, a larger share than they then had in the management of the affairs of the country." Before the close of the Session, Mr. D'Israeli had an opportunity of explaining his views as to the causes which had produced Chartism. He was a strong opponent of the Poor Law system, as then recently published, and spoke earnestly on behalf of the poor; and although the Poor Law Commission Bill was carried by a large majority, Mr. D'Israeli voted against it, as he did on several other subjects which had been brought forward by his nominal leader, Sir Robert Peel.

During the next Session Lord Melbourne and Lord John Russell were frequently in minorities, and it was evident that the Ministry existed only by sufferance. On the 28th of January Sir J. Yarde Buller moved what was tantamount to a vote of censure, or at all events of "want of confidence" in the Ministry; in the discussion which followed Mr. D'Israeli spoke strongly against the Ministry, and for the people. Owing to the approaching marriage of the Queen, very many members were unwilling to throw the state of public affairs into confusion; so they abstained from voting, and the Melbourne and Russell Ministry found that they had in their favour a majority of 21 votes.

In the early part of the year 1841, the popular

dissatisfaction against the Government, instead of Chartism, took the form of agitation for the Repeal of the Corn Laws. These laws were supported, up to the time of which we write, by both the Conservatives and the Liberals, and the Abolitionists were as yet but few in number, and mostly persons outside the House. Mr. C. P. Villiers, it is true, had year after year moved a resolution in favour of the repeal of the law which imposed a duty on the importation of foreign corn, and which so far protected the British agriculturists. But he was regarded as a "hen with one chicken," a man with a craze, or at least with one idea; a sort of amiable monomaniac, fit only for pity. But in the course of this year, the Anti-Corn Law League, which had sprung silently into existence in Manchester, under the teaching of Richard Cobden and others, was gradually becoming a power "out of doors," and in due course it began to make itself felt in St. Stephen's. The cry for cheap bread, always popular with the working classes, was heard throughout the length and breadth of the land.

In May of this year, Sir Robert Peel moved a vote of want of confidence in the Ministry, and Mr. D'Israeli supported it eloquently, denouncing the Whigs as a "haughty and rapacious oligarchy." In his speech on this occasion he paid a high tribute to Sir Robert Peel:—"He has never," he said, "employed his influence for factious purposes, and has never been stimulated in his exertions by a disordered desire of obtaining office; above all, he has never carried himself to the opposite benches

by making propositions by which he was not ready to abide." The motion was carried against the Ministers, but only by a majority of ONE? The Ministers, however, decided to appeal to the country. Within three weeks the Parliament was prorogued by Her Majesty, and on the following day it was dissolved.

The month of July witnessed a general election ; the country and the nation being heartily weary of the rule of Lord Melbourne and the Whigs, the appeal to the constituencies was answered in a most unmistakable voice ; for the Conservative majority was no less than ninety ; whereas, ever since the subsidence of the excitement of the first Reform Bill, the clear majority of the Liberals had rarely been more than twenty or twenty-five, thus leaving parties too nearly balanced to give scope for a strong and firm Government.

CHAPTER VI.

He is elected for Shrewsbury—Supports Sir Robert Peel—Afterwards becomes his Assailant—The Corn Law Question—Resignation of Sir R. Peel—The “Young England” Party.

ON the dissolution of Parliament, Mr. D’Israeli hurried down to Shrewsbury in company with Mr. George Tomline, and sought the suffrages of the electors of that borough—he, finding the “brains,” whilst his intending colleague found the “sinews of war.”

He was supported by a large body of the local gentry and clergy, including Dr. Kennedy, the head master of Shrewsbury School. His opponents were Sir Love Parry Jones-Parry, who had sat for Horsham and Carnarvon in previous Parliaments, and a Mr. Christopher Temple.

The borough was not immaculate in repute; and Mr. Tomline was, if not a millionaire, at all events a very wealthy and “liberal” candidate; and at the close of the poll the numbers stood as follows:—

Mr. Tomline	793
Mr. D’Israeli	785
Sir Love Parry Jones-Parry . .	605
Mr. C. Temple	578

One of D’Israeli’s first steps after his election for Shrewsbury was to write to Sir Robert Peel, con-

gratulating him on the victory he had gained, and announcing that he would find a ready and willing supporter in himself; but to this epistle it is said that Sir Robert did not deign to reply. Apparently he did not care much for, or appreciate, a young man with so large a "radical" element in his composition: certainly he does not appear to have thought of finding in his administration even a Junior Lordship of the Treasury for the ambitious young aspirant for place, who was destined one day to become its First Lord, and three times to write himself Premier of England.

Why Mr. D'Israeli did not offer his services a second time to the electors of Maidstone has often been asked, but never satisfactorily explained; but it must be remembered that Maidstone had the reputation of being a very corrupt and expensive borough; and, perhaps, with his high notions of independence, Mr. D'Israeli had not succeeded in procuring a sufficient number of tide waiterships, clerkships, and other minor offices for the sons of his constituents to maintain his popularity. At all events, he retired, and made way for a man of local connections and influence, Mr. Beresford-Hope. Possibly, also, his new colleague, Mr. Fector, was not willing to help him with his purse in his candidature to the same extent with his predecessor, Mr. Wyndham Lewis.

During the next two years Mr. D'Israeli gave a general and active support to Sir Robert Peel, who was at this time the object of Disraeli's ecstatic praise and adulation. With questionable taste

D'Israeli addressed to Sir Robert the following fulsome compliments :—

“ You are summoned now, like the Knight of Rhodes in Schiller’s heroic ballad, as the only hope of a suffering island. The mighty dragon is again abroad, depopulating our fields, wasting our pleasant places, poisoning our fountains, menacing our civilization. To-day he gorges on Liverpool, to-morrow he riots at Birmingham ; as he advances nearer the metropolis terror and disgust proportionately increase. Already we hear his bellow, more awful than hyæna’s ; already our atmosphere is tainted with the venomous expiration of his malignant lungs ; yet a little while, and his incendiary crest will flame on our horizon, and we shall mark the horrors of his insatiable jaws, and the scaly volume of his atrocious tail ! In your chivalry alone is our hope. Clad in the panoply of your splendid talents and your spotless character, we feel assured that you will subdue this unnatural and unnational monster, and that we may yet see sedition, and treason, and rapine, rampant as they may have of late figured, quail before your power and prowess.”

D'Israeli, indeed, about this time frequently spoke of Sir Robert Peel in similar terms of fulsome adulation. In some cases, where he could not conscientiously follow his leader, he abstained from voting ; but afterwards, especially with respect to the sugar duties, he opposed the Ministerial propositions. Every motion introduced at this time which had for its aim the bettering of the condition of the working classes received his warmest support.

It was during the Peel Ministry, from 1841 to 1846, that D'Israeli acquired his highest distinction as a master of Parliamentary invective; and during the latter portion of this period his attacks upon Sir Robert Peel were incessant. In 1842 he supported the first tariff propositions which had been brought forward by Sir Robert; but in 1843 he openly broke with his leader, and soon after became his resolute personal assailant. In February, 1844, Mr. D'Israeli made a speech on the condition of Ireland, in the course of which he said, "You have a starving population, an absentee aristocracy, and an alien Church; and, in addition, the weakest executive in the world. That is the Irish Question."

In March, 1845, on a motion made by Mr. (afterwards Sir) William Milnes for the relief of the agricultural interest, Mr. D'Israeli made a speech which was the commencement of a long battle which is now historical, and which concluded with these words:—"Protection appears to be in about the same condition in which Protestantism was in 1828. The country will draw its moral. For my part, if we are to have free trade, I, who honour genius, prefer that such measures should be proposed by the hon. member for Stockport (Mr. Cobden) than by one who, through skilful Parliamentary manœuvres, has tampered with the generous confidence of a great people and of a great party. For myself, I care not what may be the result." Then, addressing Sir Robert, he added, "Dissolve, if you please, the Parliament you have betrayed, and appeal to the

people, who, I believe, mistrust you. For me there remains this at least—the opportunity of expressing thus publicly the belief that a Conservative Government is an organized hypocrisy.”

Immediately on the opening of the Parliamentary Session of 1846, Sir Robert Peel proposed the abolition, after two years, of the duties on imported grain. D’Israeli strenuously resisted the successive acts of the fiscal enfranchisement, which followed this great measure. “In him the shipping, the sugar, the colonial, and other assailed ‘interests,’ found an able and valorous defender; and, although his defence was in no way victorious, he nevertheless strengthened himself by attaching to him certain of the wealthier sections of the community by ties of admiration and gratitude.” During the progress of the debate Mr. D’Israeli proposed the following resolution:—“That the whole of the local taxation of the country for national purposes falls mainly, if not exclusively, on real property; and bears with undue severity on the occupiers of land, in a manner injurious to the agricultural interests of the country, and otherwise highly impolitic and unjust. That the hardship of this apportionment is aggravated by the fact that more than one-third of the whole revenue derived from the excise is levied upon agricultural produce, exposed, by the recent changes in the law, to direct competition with the untaxed produce of foreign countries; the home producer being thus subjected to a burden of taxation which, by greatly enhancing the price, limits the demand for British produce, and to

restrictions which injuriously interfere with the conduct of his trade and industry. That this House will resolve itself into a committee to take into its serious consideration such measures as may remove the grievances of which the owners and occupiers of real property thus justly complain, and which may establish a more equitable apportionment of the public burdens."

Mr. D'Israeli then showed by statistical details that taxes to the amount of £12,000,000 were imposed upon the rental of landed property amounting to £67,000,000; and, as a remedy for this inequality, he announced his design to propose that the system of local administration and the levy of rates remaining as at present, that the local districts should be responsible for one moiety, and the other be paid from the consolidated fund. The correctness of these statistics was denied; and it was argued that, even granting their correctness, the remedy itself would be abortive. In the end the proposal was thrown out by a majority of 280 to 189.

The great measure of Sir Robert Peel was carried, but the Ministry resigned. In the discussion of the motion for the Repeal of the Corn Laws, reference was made to an incident in the then recent war between Sultan Mahmoud and Ibrahim Pacha. The Turkish admiral had treacherously delivered over the whole of his fleet to the foe; Peel, said D'Israeli, had done the same. He represented Peel as thus soliloquizing:—"True it is that I did place myself at the head of this

valiant armada—true that my sovereign embraced me, and that all the muftis of the kingdom prayed for the success of the expedition. But I had an objection to war. I saw no use in prolonging the struggle, and the only reason for my accepting the leadership was, that I might terminate the contest by betraying my master.”

After the great rupture in the political arena had taken place, D’Israeli took even a more distinct and higher stand than he had occupied during his five years’ duel with Peel. The “Young Englanders,” of whom D’Israeli was the leader, had thrown themselves into the fray; the second and third posts being filled by Lord John Manners and Mr. G. Sydney Smythe, afterwards Lord Strangford. Another prominent member of the “Young England” party was Lord Maidstone (now Earl of Winchilsea). A “key” to “Young Englandism” may be found in one of Lord Beaconsfield’s early works: “It is a holy thing,” said Coningsby, “to see a State saved by its youth.”

Speaking on the 15th of May, in opposition to one of Sir Robert Peel’s propositions, Mr. D’Israeli said :—

“When I examine the career of this Minister, which has now filled a great space in the Parliamentary history of the country, I find that for between thirty and forty years that Right Honourable Gentleman has traded on the ideas and intelligence of others. His life has been one great appropriation clause. He is a burglar of others’ intellect. I have that confidence in the common

sense, I will say the common spirit, of our countrymen, that I believe they will not long endure this huckstering tyranny of the Treasury Bench—these political pedlars that bought their party in the cheapest market, and sold us in the dearest.”

Then, addressing the Speaker, with all the solemnity which his pure patriotism could muster, D’Israeli remarked, still keeping his eye on Sir Robert:—“Sir, the right hon. gentleman tells us that he does not feel humiliated. Sir, it is impossible for any one to know what are the feelings of another. Feeling depends on temperament; it depends on the idiosyncrasy of the individual; it depends on the organization of the animal that feels. But this I will tell the right right hon. gentleman, that though *he* may not feel humiliated, *his country* ought to feel humiliated.”

Referring, as he delighted to refer, to Peel’s particular manner and style of delivery, and to his growing habit of arrogant dictation, he said:—“Another place (the House of Lords) may be drilled into a guard-room, and the House of Commons may be degraded into a vestry.” Again, in allusion to the curse of Ireland, he called Peel “a great Parliamentary middle-man—a man who bamboozled one party, and plundered the other, till, having obtained a position to which he was not entitled, he cried out, ‘Let us have no party! Let us have fixity of tenure!’” On another occasion Mr. D’Israeli said that Sir Robert Peel had “caught the Whigs bathing, and stolen their clothes.”

CHAPTER VII.

He succeeds Lord G. Bentinck as Leader of the Conservatives—Appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer under Lord Derby—He becomes Leader of the "Opposition"—Returns to Office.

As time rolled on, so Mr. D'Israeli's power in debate strengthened, and he became more and more useful to his party; and on the death of Lord George Bentinck, he took the leadership of the Opposition or Protectionist party. He had at the general election in the preceding year been returned as one of the members for Buckinghamshire, in which he had now acquired a permanent stake and interest as the owner of Hughenden; his colleagues were Mr. Caledon George Dupré and the Hon. Charles Compton Cavendish, afterwards Lord Chesham. Mr. D'Israeli retained his seat for the county with which he had so many personal associations until he was raised to the peerage.

In 1849 Mr. D'Israeli first formally moved the amendment to the address in answer to the Queen's Speech; and on the death of one of the senior members of the Royal Family, a short time afterwards, he was selected by the Premier, Lord John Russell, to second the customary vote of condolence. In the Royal Speech was this sentence:—"The present aspect of affairs has enabled me to make large reductions in the estimates of the year,"

Mr. D'Israeli, in moving the amendment to the address seized hold upon this sentence in order to attack the Ministry. "Her Majesty's Ministers," he said, "have yielded to public opinion (the voice and clamour of organized clubs) as a tradesman does who is detected in an act of overcharge—he yields to public opinion when he takes a less sum. So the permanent affairs of this country are to be arranged, not upon principles of high policy, or from any imperial considerations, but because there is an unholy pressure from a minority which demands it, and who have a confidence of success, because they know that they have beaten the Prime Minister. We (the Tory party) stand here to maintain the majesty of Parliament against the Jacobin manœuvres of Lancashire. I would sooner my tongue were palsied before I counselled the people of England to lower their tone."

On the reassembling of Parliament, in February 1850, the claims of the agricultural classes were again brought before the House by Mr. D'Israeli. He stated that the prospects of agriculturists were daily becoming darker; that the value of the fee-simple of the soil was deteriorating, and the factitious employment of the people in rural districts diminishing. The only sure remedy for this, he alleged, was the re-establishment of those protective laws which had lately been abrogated. But as the Government now stood committed to free trade, so that such a change was hopeless, he would propose, instead, the remission of that local taxation which weighed heaviest upon the agricul-

tural classes. He would propose therefore the following resolutions:—1. That the poor-law establishment charges in the United Kingdom (about £1,500,000) should be transferred to the general revenue. 2. That certain miscellaneous rates which, generally speaking, it was convenient to raise by the machinery of the poor-law, but which had nothing to do with the maintenance of the poor, such as registration of births and deaths, preparation of jury lists, &c., should also be defrayed by the consolidated fund. 3. That the charge for the casual poor throughout the United Kingdom should likewise be transferred to the general revenue.

Against these proposals, and the statements by which they were enforced, the arguments of the Free Trade party were numerous and cogent. It was alleged that it involved the question of whether £18,000,000 or £20,000,000 should be transferred from the land to the consolidated fund. It was also stated that considerable agricultural distress had pervaded other countries of Europe, where prices had been depressed, notwithstanding protection, and with the advantage of free importation into England. Besides, it appeared that during the preceding year we had imported 5,600,000 quarters of foreign wheat, which had chiefly been consumed by those who lived by labour; and that from such an augmented demand, our own produce had the best chance of success. How strong the Protectionist party still was, and with what reluctance these arguments were received, was shown on

the division of the House, when the motion was negatived by a majority of only 21—252 votes being in its favour, and 273 against it.

The sudden death of Sir Robert Peel in 1850,* carried off, at a most convenient season, a hated antagonist and a possible rival in the future; just as the equally sudden death of Lord George Bentinck, about two years previously, made the way to power and office more open to his ambition.

From 1848 until 1852, when he first secured office, Mr. D'Israeli had played his part as leader of the Protectionist or Old Tory Party so far successfully, and his various tactics had been marked with such consummate ability, that, on the retirement of Lord John Russell's cabinet in March, 1852, and the formation of a Tory government under Lord Derby, Mr. D'Israeli was assigned the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer.

In 1851 Mr. D'Israeli poured out the full vials of his scorn on Lord John Russell's "Ecclesiastical Titles Bill," declaring his conviction that the Pope would never have appointed Catholic Bishops in England if he had not been encouraged to do so by the recognition of his Bishops in Ireland by the Whigs. In spite of this, however, he voted for the Bill, probably foreseeing that it would speedily become a dead letter, as indeed proved to be the case, and that nobody would be really the worse for it.

It is scarcely necessary here to do more than

* Sheil said of the sudden death of Sir Robert Peel that it seemed to have left Mr. D'Israeli in the position of an anatomist whose "subject" had been snatched away from him.

remind the reader that during the long agitation, both in Parliament and outside its doors, on the subject of the admission of members of the Jewish body to take their seats without subscribing the oath "upon the faith of a Christian," Mr. D'Israeli acted independently of his party, and manfully carried out his convictions, speaking and voting in favour of the repeal of the disabilities of his countrymen. Regarding the Christian Religion as the fitting and proper complement of the Israelitish system, he still regarded the Jews, though he had quitted their body, as his brethren, and as undeserving of exclusion from a share in the Legislature. It was therefore with no small feelings of pride and satisfaction that he saw Baron Rothschild, after repeated rebuffs and rejections, come forward to the table of the House of Commons, and take his seat as a Member of Parliament.

The *Daily Telegraph* (1874) notes that had Lord Derby been capable of the least jealousy, "he might have envied a colleague whose reputation for eloquence was so deservedly high. It is certainly to his lasting credit as a judge of character, that at a time when Mr. D'Israeli was one of the least liked public personages in England—detested by Liberals for his hostile wit, and distrusted by Tories because they did not understand him—Lord Derby sustained him in the path that led to the Premiership. But we are not sure that without Lord Derby's genial confidence at first and firm friendship to the last, he would have continued in that training for the Premiership that has resulted

in his present striking success. If he did not invent or discover Mr. D'Israeli, Lord Derby gave him fine opportunities, ensured him a free career, and adopted him as his political heir." This aid he lived to acknowledge in more than a single public speech.

The Derby Ministry was but short-lived; for at the close of the same year, when the stability of the Government was to be tried upon the question of financial re-adjustment, the result was a collapse. The plan of the Ministry was set forth by Mr. D'Israeli on the 3rd of December, in an eloquent speech of five hours' duration. Into its long details it is unnecessary to enter; suffice it to say, that both plan and supporters were swamped in the attempt. The new Chancellor had devoted himself heart and soul to the task, and had devised a financial scheme by which all former schemes were to be surpassed as well as superseded; but it pleased no one, and effected nothing. The debate was continued four nights by successive adjournment, and the Government was defeated by a majority of 305 against 286. Resignation after such a defeat was unavoidable, and accordingly the Earl of Derby and his colleagues repaired to Osborne, and gave up their seals of office into Her Majesty's hands.

It is not a little remarkable that Mr. D'Israeli's first Budget received the support of Mr. Gladstone. The Budget, however, itself was only of a temporary character, for the Ministry awaited the result of the general election, having pledged themselves to

abide by the decision of the country as to a Free-Trade policy. The result of this appeal, which took place in July, 1852, was in favour of Free-Trade, and Lord Derby, in the House of Lords, and Mr. D'Israeli, in the House of Commons, accepted the decision. The second Budget, as stated above, was brought forward in December; the most prominent features in it were reductions of some duties, and increase of the area of the income and house taxes. This was vehemently opposed by Mr. Gladstone, and the Government was defeated by a majority of 19.

Towering over his Conservative colleagues, head and shoulders in intellect, Mr. D'Israeli now became the recognized leader of the Tories in the House of Commons, in the ranks of the Opposition. For the next six years he remained out of office. This was a period of great political excitement; it had witnessed the Ministerial discords of the Aberdeen (or Coalition) and the Palmerston Administrations, the Crimean War, Mr. Roebuck's Committee of Inquiry, and the Indian Mutiny. Mr. D'Israeli, as might be expected, was very strong in his expressions of condemnation on the Crimean war, and on the manner in which it was being carried on, declaring that the war was the result of a division of opinions in the Cabinet, and that the conduct of Lord Aberdeen and his colleagues was marked "by vacillation, by perplexity, by fitfulness, by timidity, and by occasional violence,"—the result of "rival opinions, contrary politics, and discordant systems," adding that it was needless,

in his view, to move a vote of want of confidence in a Ministry "whose members have no confidence in each other." He supported, however, Mr. Roebuck's motion for a committee of inquiry into the conduct of the war—which led to Lord Aberdeen's resignation. In February, 1858, Lord Palmerston's Administration having been defeated on the Conspiracy to Murder Bill, which, had it passed, would have destroyed the ancient and much abused right of asylum on our shores for political refugees, Lord Derby was again summoned to power, and Mr. D'Israeli again became Chancellor of the Exchequer.

CHAPTER VIII.

Again in office under Lord Derby—Introduces a Reform Bill—Defeat and Resignation of Lord Derby—Mr. D'Israeli appointed Premier.

DURING this year an episode occurred in connection with the publication of a despatch to Lord Canning, the then Governor-General of India, and which had reference to his lordship's conduct in dealing with the Indian Mutiny. The *Illustrated London News* wrote on this occasion :—" Lord Derby tried to shuffle off much of the blame of the publication of the dispatch to the shoulders of the Vice-President of the Board of Control, Mr. Henry Baillie, the member for Inverness-shire. Mr. Baillie, according to the Premier, without consulting any other member of the Administration, promised the publication of the celebrated dispatch. But people said that the real offender, though he escaped open and avowed blame, was no less a person than Mr. D'Israeli himself. True, Mr. Baillie said there could be no objection to produce the despatch; but this announcement might have been overruled. It was Mr. D'Israeli who jumped to his feet when Mr. Bright asked for the purport of the dispatch, and volunteered the most unnecessary information that the Ministers had 'sent out a despatch to the Governor-General of India dis-

approving the policy which he indicated *in every sense.*' After this statement, the publication of the despatch followed as a matter of course. But the first announcement of its publication was only made to the House of Peers a few minutes after Mr. D'Israeli's statement in the House of Commons, and when concealment was, of course, impossible. His lordship himself was evidently nettled by Mr. Disraeli's indiscretion. When Lord Granville drew attention to it, the following were Lord Ellenborough's remarkable words:—*I know nothing of what has occurred in another place, but no communication whatever has taken place between the member of the other House (Mr. D'Israeli) who has given the answer to which the noble Earl (Granville) has referred, and myself, as to the terms in which that answer has been given.*" There were whispers that Mr. D'Israeli's indiscretion was not the mere result of a momentary impulse to acquire popularity, but part of a premeditated plan. Let it go forth to the world that Lord Canning had been censured by the Government, and he must resign. Mr. D'Israeli took care that the news should go forth. Some said that he himself looked to fill the vacancy which would thus inevitably be occasioned. What scope in the Governor-Generalship of India for the great professor of the "Asian mystery!"

The Bill for transferring the Government of India from the old East India Company to the Crown, through a Secretary of State and an Indian Council, was passed under Mr. D'Israeli's auspices.

It should also be mentioned here that for one great metropolitan improvement at the least, Londoners have to thank Mr. D'Israeli. In this year (1858), the water of the Thames had become so foul and offensive as to cause almost a panic in Westminster Hall and the adjoining Palace. At his instigation the Government took the matter in hand, sanctioning an outlay of £1,200 a week on immediate measures of a remedial character, and brought in a Bill for the amendment of the Metropolis Local Management Act, by which the Board of Works was authorized to levy for not more than forty years a rate not exceeding three-pence in the pound, in order to provide means for a Main Drainage Scheme, under what the offensive sewage was carried into the salt water near Erith. The Bill was passed with great rapidity through both houses, and received the royal assent before the end of the session.

In 1859 D'Israeli introduced a Reform Bill, the drift of which was to ensure a "lateral extension of the franchise, so that the educated classes should be admitted to the suffrage without regard to property qualification." He stated that the non-interference with the occupancy borough franchise was a principle of the Bill, by which it must "stand or fall." He warmly opposed the principle of representation based merely on population. "It is notorious that, if you come to population in round numbers, 10,500,000 of the people of England return only 150 or 160 county members, while the boroughs, representing 7,500,000, return more

than 330 members. Admitting, then, the principle of population, you must disfranchise your boroughs and give the members to the counties." This argument was enough, apparently, to cause the failure of the measure; for the Bill was lost, and the appeal to the country which followed in the month of June, 1859, resulting in a minority to the Ministry, they accordingly resigned.

For another six years Mr. D'Israeli again remained out of office, but the period was marked by great activity on his part, both as leader of the Opposition, and also in a literary sense. He opposed the Budgets of Mr. Gladstone, and his speeches were published in a collective form. He had long been known as an ardent advocate of what he characteristically styled "that sacred union between Church and State which has hitherto been the chief means of our civilization, and is the only security of our religious liberties;" and, writes his biographer in the "English Cyclopædia," "he signalized his long period of opposition by taking a prominent part, both in Parliament and elsewhere, in confronting the ecclesiastical legislation of the Liberal party."

The month of July, 1866, found Lord Derby once more in power, with Mr. D'Israeli for the third time as his Chancellor of the Exchequer. Once more the settlement of the long agitated question of Reform was attempted. Lord Derby was willing to extend the franchise to the working classes "with no niggard hand;" but, though he found in Mr. D'Israeli a willing coadjutor, "their course was seriously retarded and embarrassed by the hesitations,

fears, and disapproval of many members of their own party." Mr. D'Israeli had, as he boldly remarked, "educated his party," and it was upon him, therefore, that the work of conciliating the malcontents mainly devolved. In this he was so far successful that in 1867 the Tories were induced to pass a measure of Reform, which was so far Radical as to make household suffrage the basis of the Parliamentary franchise. The Bill included the taking of thirty members from small constituencies, enfranchising several towns which had risen into importance since the passing of the Reform Bill of 1832, and giving more members to the larger counties.

The attitude of Mr. D'Israeli, with regard to Reform, throughout the larger portion of his political career is set forth in a volume entitled "Parliamentary Reform," which was edited by Mr. Montagu Corry (the present Lord Rowton). The memorable speeches delivered at Edinburgh, in which Mr. D'Israeli claimed to have "educated" his party to the passing of the Reform Bill, and which gave considerable umbrage to some of his adherents, were published "by authority" with the title of "The Chancellor of the Exchequer in Scotland, being two speeches delivered by him in the city of Edinburgh, on the 29th and 30th of October, 1867." This question of D'Israeli having "educated his party" was animadverted upon very strongly at the time, and reference was also made to it in the House of Lords by Earl Russell, to which Mr. D'Israeli—with questionable taste—gave a reply through the public journals. According to Earl Russell, Mr. D'Israeli

boasted at Edinburgh that, while he had, during seven years been opposing any reduction of the borough franchise, he had all the time been educating his party with a view of bringing about a much greater reduction of the franchise than that which his opponents had proposed. According to Mr. D'Israeli, what he did in reality say, was that the process of "education" to which the Tories had been subjected was not one conducted by himself, but was merely the result of the experience which they had gained during the interval which elapsed during the failure of their Bill in 1859, and their more successful attempt to deal with the subject last year. Nothing could be more different than the two things; but, unfortunately for Mr. D'Israeli, his version of that famous speech was not supported either by the report which appeared in the newspapers at the time, or by the authorized edition subsequently published by Messrs. Blackwood. In the first the words attributed to him were "I had to prepare the mind of the country and—if it be not too arrogant to use such a phrase—to educate our party. It is a large party, and requires its attention to be called to questions of this kind with some pressure." In the second, the word "I" was changed into "we," evidently in order to soften down the apparent arrogance of which Mr. D'Israeli had not been wholly insensible even while speaking. But if "we" was the expression really used, it is difficult to see what was the necessity for adding immediately afterwards, "that was done with the concurrence not only of Lord Derby, but of my colleagues." That state-

ment would have been perfectly needless had Mr. D'Israeli spoken in the first instance on behalf of those colleagues as well as himself. But whether "we" or "I" was the word actually used, the sentence cannot be made to bear the meaning which Mr. D'Israeli afterwards ascribed to it. It does mean and can only mean that, either by himself or by their leaders collectively, the Tories were for seven years consciously, and "of malice aforethought," educated in a policy of which the legitimate result and expression was the Act of 1867. In either form it seems to be more or less a misrepresentation of the most notorious facts of contemporary history.

A few months later—namely, in February, 1868, Lord Derby relinquished his place as head of the Government, and was succeeded by Mr. D'Israeli. Lord Derby was already well advanced in years, and was beginning to feel the infirmities of age, coupled with which were frequent attacks of gout, to which he had long been subjected ; these infirmities, together with an ever-increasing feeling of indolence, and a fondness for classical studies, led him to tender his resignation, and to hand the reins of Government over to his younger colleague. Mr. D'Israeli accordingly received Her Majesty's commands to form a new Cabinet, and so the prophecy of his boyhood was at last fulfilled ; and thus the very man whom, thirty-five years before, the House of Commons had laughed down, had become Prime Minister of England.

Punch produced on the occasion a cartoon,

“ Vivian Grey sent for ;” and in his address to his constituents, the electors of Buckinghamshire, Mr. D’Israeli gave a concise outline of the policy which would regulate his official career. “ His discourse,” remarked one of the leading daily papers of the time, “ begins modestly enough. In fact, the opening allusion to his relations with Lord Derby has rather the air of a circular announcing to the customers of a retiring tradesman that So-and-So, late the confidential clerk of the firm for twenty years, having succeeded to this old-established business, it will be conducted on the same principles as hitherto, and that he hopes by assiduity and steadiness to merit the continuance of their favours and patronage.”

The *Morning Post* was certainly more charitable and sympathetic in its remarks :—

“ It must be admitted that Mr. D’Israeli has achieved success under the most difficult conditions. He is in the fullest sense of the term ‘ self made.’ If he is Prime Minister of England to-day, he has nothing but his own talent, and industry, and perseverance to thank for having reached the goal. Family interest or influence he had none. He entered Parliament entirely unknown, and from unknown circumstances as unpropitious as any which it is possible to conceive he has attained the proudest position to which a subject can aspire. In a country possessing institutions like our own, and professing (whatever the practice may be to the contrary) to ignore favouritism, this is a merit which every one, whatever may be his personal or party feelings on

the subject, is bound cordially to acknowledge. There is nothing so successful as success, and we willingly pay to Mr. D'Israeli that meed which his industry, his talents, and his surpassing ability as a party leader justly entitle him to receive at our hands."

Mr. D'Israeli's short occupancy of power was signalized by the favour which he showed to the Protestantism, and even the Orangeism, of Ireland, when the question of the disestablishment of the Church of that country was first agitated by Mr. Gladstone. The condition of Ireland at that time was set forth by Mr. D'Israeli, in a speech which he delivered in March, 1868, in the following graphic style :—

"He wanted to see a public man come forward and say what the Irish question was. One said it was a physical question ; another a spiritual. Now it was the absence of the aristocracy ; then the absence of railways. It was the Pope one day ; potatoes the next. Let them consider Ireland as they would any other country similarly situated in their closets. . . . That dense population in extreme distress inhabited an island where there was an Established Church, which was not their Church, and a territorial aristocracy, the richest of whom lived in distant capitals. Thus they had a starving population, an absentee aristocracy, and an alien Church. That was the Irish question. Well, then, what would hon. gentlemen say if they were reading of a country in that position ? They would say at once the remedy is revolution. But

the Irish people could not have a revolution, and why? Because Ireland was connected with another and more powerful country. Then what was the consequence. The connection with England thus became the cause of the present state of Ireland. If the connection with England prevented a revolution, and a revolution was the only remedy, England logically was in the odious position of being the cause of all the misery of Ireland. What, then, was the duty of an English Minister? To effect by his policy all those changes which a revolution would do by force. That was the Irish question, in its integrity. There was no possible way in which the physical condition of the people could be improved by Act of Parliament. The moment they had a strong executive, a just Administration, and ecclesiastical equality, they would have order in Ireland."

He then proceeded to set forth the main grievances of Ireland, namely, the "identity of institutions with England," and especially that "primary and most important institution of all, the union of Church and State, which was opposed by the Irish people." Here are his words:—

"Justice to Ireland was then said to mean an identity of institutions with England. He believed that to be the greatest fallacy that could be brought forward. He always thought that the greatest cause of misery in Ireland was the identity of institutions with England. Surely we had given similar institutions more than enough. How could people ask for identity of institutions when the

very primary and most important institution of all—the union of Church and State—was opposed by the Irish people. . . . He said that instead of having an identity of institutions, they should get rid of all those institutions which they had forced upon that country.”

Having pointed out that the first remedy for the ills of Ireland was to “get rid of all those institutions which we had forced on the country,” Mr. D’Israeli then proceeded philosophically to consider the origin of this unhappy state of affairs, and what he considered the true method of removing it. He said:—

“He begged to say distinctly that he had never changed his principles on Irish policy or in any other respect. He said this without reservation—at no time, at no place, under no circumstances, had he ever professed any other principles than he now maintained. They were Tory principles—the natural principles of the democracy of England. . . . They were Tory principles, such as he found them in the pages of eminent writers—such as they were practised at happy epochs in the history of this country by eminent statesmen. . . . The condition of Ireland was to be traced not to Protestantism, but to Puritanism. . . . The rebellion in Ireland in the time of Charles I. had led to the establishment of a Government of an essentially national character—the Convention of Kilkenny, a body with whom the King of England had been more than once in treaty. The King of England, through Glamorgan, afterwards the famous Marquis

of Worcester, had entered into a treaty for the settlement of Ireland with the Convention of Kilkenny, in the secret articles of which were laid down the principles upon which the pacification of Ireland was to take place. The secret articles of that treaty were merely that the Roman Catholics should enjoy the same civil and political equality which they had done previously to the breaking out of the Civil War—this was, that they should not be called on to take the oaths of supremacy; and with reference to the Protestant Church, that there should be a recognized equality between the two Churches. These were the articles which Charles I. by his word of honour had ratified.”

Mr. D’Israeli then proceeded to recommend to the “Tory democracy” the immediate adoption of this policy. He said:—

“He was content to tread the old path, the natural way, he repeated, of the democracy of England. He had no idea that the Tory party should always be regarded as the tyrants of Ireland; he had no idea that they should be looked upon as those who had treated the Irish as serfs and slaves, the authors of their confiscation and their penal laws. It was not so. Let them forget two centuries of political conduct for which Toryism was not responsible; let them recur to the benignant policy of Charles I.;—then they might settle Ireland with honour to themselves, with kindness to the people, and with safety to the realm.”

In the course of his speech to the electors of Buckinghamshire at the General Election in

November, 1868, in dealing with the conduct of our foreign affairs under the rule of the Conservatives. Mr. D'Israeli said:—

“ When we acceded to office, in 1866, our relations with all the Great Powers of Europe, though they were relations of courtesy, were not relations of confidence. We were viewed with suspicion and distrust, and that suspicion and distrust was occasioned by the mismanagement of our affairs by Lord Russell in the cases of Denmark, of Germany, and of Russia. By the line which he took with reference to Denmark, to Germany and to Poland estranged this country—it required great skill to do it, but he did do it—he estranged this country at once and the same time from France, from Germany, and from Russia. Our relations with those countries now, and with all countries, are not relations of estrangement, but of confidence. I maintain that this is something to have done. Besides, I wish to add, that in announcing our policy to be a policy of non-interference, all we mean to say is, that we will not exhaust the energies nor waste the treasure of this country by interfering in continental struggles to uphold an imaginary and fallacious balance of power. But, because we thus announce what we call a policy of non-interference, we do not mean to say that we will not act when the interests and the honour of England require it; and because we maintain a policy of non-interference of the character I have described, that is no reason why we should not sympathize with other nations. On the contrary,

we have the greatest interest in the prosperity and tranquillity of the continent of Europe. Our interest is that there should be peace in Europe ; and we value our influence because, by using it, we believe that we can assist the maintenance of peace."

Mr. D'Israeli then dwelt at some length upon the condition of Ireland, and with reference to the then all-absorbing question of the disestablishment of the Irish Church. Having incidentally referred to Fenianism, which was then rampant, Mr. D'Israeli proceeded to urge that "the policy which proposed to disestablish the Church of Ireland in order to put to Fenianism was wrong in its inception. Without entering into the merits of the proposal to touch the Church of Ireland at all," he continued, "I say that it has no connection whatever with Fenianism. I am opposed to that policy otherwise, and upon grounds which I think the people of this country will do well to consider ; I believe it to be a policy rife with consequences most injurious to this country. I have never heard any one say, for example, that it was a policy which would tend to increase the security of property in this country, a point which has always been considered one of the most important for a statesman to maintain. I have heard some say that it would shake the security of property to its centre ; but no man of wise and temperate views, whatever may be his opinion as to the necessity of the policy proposed by the leader of the Opposition, will assert, I think, that the proposal to disestablish

and disendow the Irish Church is one which can be sanctioned without great danger to and without great apprehension by the holders of property. There are other very grave objections to it. It will, I believe, revive and increase discontent in Ireland. I cannot conceive that the Protestant population of Ireland—and the feelings of the Protestant population of Ireland ought to be considered, for though they are not a majority we must acknowledge that they form a large portion of the people of Ireland—I say I cannot conceive that the Protestants of Ireland will be more disposed to act in sympathy and unanimity with their brethren who profess the Roman Catholic religion because of these violent courses. But, above all, it appears to me this is an attack upon a principle of the highest importance in politics—the necessary connection of religion with government—which, I should think, very few men in this county-hall are prepared to relinquish, and which, if it were relinquished, would, I believe, exercise a most injurious effect upon the social as well as political condition of this country. The inevitable consequence of the dissolution of the connection between Church and State would be, I believe, to revive religious animosity and to stir up efforts for the propagation of particular faiths in a manner from which I thought we were entirely free, and from which it certainly has been the effort of legislation for many years past to keep us entirely disconnected. Once the happy settlement of our Constitution is disturbed by any violent dealing

with that system which establishes the supremacy of the Queen, I see before me a future of religious discord—a future of social disquiet and disturbance, to which we must all look forward with apprehension, and which many of us, I fear, will live to deplore.”

CHAPTER IX.

He again becomes Leader of the Opposition—Mrs. D'Israeli created Viscountess Beaconsfield—Her Death—Bill for the Disestablishment of the Irish Church and the Irish Land Bill—Is again appointed Premier—Resignation.

At the close of the year, the General Election having resulted in a large majority for the Liberal party, Mr. D'Israeli tendered his resignation, without waiting to meet Parliament, and the reins of government passed into the hands of Mr. Gladstone.

A certain amount of mystery surrounded Mr. D'Israeli's speech in the House of Commons when he told his hearers that her Majesty had empowered him to dissolve Parliament after the defeat of the Government on Mr. Gladstone's Irish Church Resolutions. Mr. D'Israeli, it is asserted, "by offering two courses for her Majesty's adoption, sought to throw upon her the responsibilities of having retained her then advisers in her confidence."

Mr. D'Israeli was now once more the leader of the Opposition. A peerage was offered to him on his retirement from the Ministry, but he declined it, accepting, however, the honour for his wife, on whom the title of "Viscountess Beaconsfield, of Beaconsfield, Bucks," was conferred. Her ladyship lived, however, but a short time to enjoy the

honour, her death taking place on the 15th of December, 1872. Her remains were interred in Hughenden churchyard, Mr. D'Israeli following as chief mourner. Henceforth he was destined to occupy Hughenden as a solitary man.

As leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons, during the next five years, Mr. D'Israeli had plenty of sharp encounters with the Ministry, for much of the time was taken up in fierce disputes on the subject of Irish legislation. In 1869 Mr. D'Israeli took action against his rival's Bill for the Abolition of the Irish Church Establishment, "to which," observes his biographer in the *English Cyclopædia*, "whilst virtually accepting the disestablishment and disendowment of that Church, he proposed a series of amendments, which he soon ceased to defend, and the effect of which, in Mr. Gladstone's calculation, would have been to add one or two millions to the then existing endowment of the Church. With reference to the Irish Land Bill, the passing of which was the great work of 1870, Mr. D'Israeli and some of his adherents undertook to demonstrate the inconsistency of the Bill with the rights of property, whilst they explicitly and virtually acknowledged the necessity of buying off agrarian disaffection in Ireland. The final adoption of the Bill in its complete form was furthered by the absence of systematic opposition, and more especially by the forbearance of Mr. D'Israeli, who throughout the Session avoided unnecessary occasions of conflict.

On the 24th of January, 1874, Mr. Gladstone,

being unable to carry his Irish Universities Bills and finding that the bye-elections almost always ran against his party, resolved to appeal to the country, and the result of this appeal was that the feelings of the constituencies had so far changed that the Conservatives in the House had a majority of sixty. On the 17th of February Mr. Gladstone resigned, and Mr. D'Israeli was once more ruler in his stead. It was decided after the election for the county of Buckingham, for which constituency, Mr. D'Israeli had been successively returned as representative since 1847, that his expenses should be defrayed by the electors. The fund was accordingly promptly raised, and on the 19th of May the sum of £1,500 was handed over by the committee to Mr. Powell, the right honourable gentleman's agent. In reply to the letter of the committee asking permission to hand over the money, Mr. D'Israeli wrote as follows:—

“10, Downing Street, Whitehall.

“Gentlemen,—It is very difficult for me to express the feelings with which I have read your letter respecting our county election. I have ever considered the honour of representing the undivided county of Buckingham as so great that I could conceive no sacrifice and no labour which would not be light to obtain such a distinction. It is a county that has ever taken a lead in the public life of England, as evidenced by the fact that out of the thirty Prime Ministers since the accession of the reigning House, five have been furnished by

Buckinghamshire to the service of the Crown and nation. The confidence of such a county is a sufficient reward for my life, and after seven-and-twenty years as its representative, I feel still much its debtor. This conviction, and some other more ordinary feelings, might have made me hesitate before I accepted the munificent testimony of its regard which you announce to me ; but when I observe how spontaneously and how universally it has arisen, I can only look upon it as the act of a generous and a high-spirited constituency, which, though I may not merit it, it would be presumption to decline.

“ Believe me, Gentlemen, with many thanks for your great courtesy in this communication, your faithful and obliged servant,

(Signed) B. D'ISRAELI.

“ To Colonel Caulfield Pratt, Christie Miller, Esq., and Richard Rose, Esq., Aylesbury.”

In his address to the electors, the new Premier said : “ I should say of the Administration of the past five years, that it would have been better for us all had there been a little more energy in our foreign policy, and a little less in our domestic legislation. However, notwithstanding that the foreign policy of the Government may have appeared to his mind to have been devoid of energy, our domestic legislation had been so far successful as to give the incoming Ministry a surplus of nearly £6,000,000. This surplus, however, in the course of a very short time, diminished and finally dis-

appeared, as new expenses were incurred. The Eastern Question soon became one of paramount importance, and other troubles were arising in South Africa. At the close of 1874, and beginning of the following year, insurrections in the Herzegovina and Bosnia began to assume alarming proportions ; and it soon became apparent that Turkey was financially in an almost helpless condition. In August a joint "Note" from the great European Powers was addressed to the Porte, urging the adoption of sundry important changes, and in November the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople, General Ignatieff, endeavoured to urge upon the Sultan the necessity of large administrative and financial reform.

In November, 1873, Mr. D'Israeli took the opportunity of his installation as Lord Rector of the University of Glasgow to deliver an attack upon the whole policy of the Government, domestic and foreign ; and in January, 1874, when Mr. Gladstone determined on appealing once more to the country, Mr. D'Israeli was ready for the encounter, and prepared with an important revelation concerning the results of "Liberal misgovernment in the Straits of Malacca.

The election ended in a substantial victory for Mr. D'Israeli, "who," to quote the language of the *Daily News*, "was generally supposed to have been offered, and to have accepted, the task of restoring peace to the harassed interests, and presiding in a dignified manner over a tranquil policy and a lethargic people. The first two years of his reign,"

continues the writer, "fulfilled this expectation almost to the letter. Quietude prevailed abroad. The Statute Book was filled with strictly permissive, simply amending, or merely consolidating measures. Mr. Gladstone retired from the Leadership of the Liberal party, and Lord Hartington succeeded to his post in the House of Commons. But in the summer of 1876 were heard the mutterings of a storm. Mr. Gladstone called attention to the 'great and dreadful grievances' of the Christians in Bulgaria, and Mr. D'Israeli's last words in the House, of which for nearly forty years he had been a distinguished ornament, described as 'coffee-house babble,' narratives subsequently too thoroughly confirmed."

It might have been supposed from his antecedents, and more especially from his connection with the leaders of the "Young England" party, that Mr. D'Israeli would not have felt any great repugnance to the romantic and fantastic revivals of the externals of religion which pass in the world as "Ritualism." But yet when Mr. Russell Gurney brought forward his "Public Worship Act," the object of which was to suppress these practices, it was supported by Mr. D'Israeli, though condemned by the most sound-judging and experienced members. Probably he regarded it as a necessary concession to the popular outcry out-of-doors, and thought that, like the Ecclesiastical Titles Bill, it would become inoperative. If so, he soon found out his mistake.

CHAPTER X.

He publishes "Lothair"—Mr. D'Israeli's Preface to his Collected Works—He is raised to the Peerage.

MR. D'ISRAELI'S literary reputation from the time of his entering Parliament had gradually been in the ascendant. In 1839 he produced "*Alarcos, a Tragedy*," and five years later he published "*Coningsby, or the New Generation*," a political novel on "*Young England*" principles. "*Sybil, or the Two Nations*," a novel of similar purpose, was published by him in 1845; "*Tancred, or the New Crusade*," also a political novel, produced in 1847; and a "*Biography of Lord G. Bentinck*," in 1852.

On the 2nd of May, 1870, eighteen months after his retirement from the cares of office, the literary world was astonished by the publication of another society novel, which its author named "*Lothair*," possibly after the forgotten hero of a story by "the author of *Vivian Grey*," published in the "*Book of Beauty*," so far back as 1835.* The hero of the story is the Marquis of Bute; and Monsignor Capel, Cardinal Manning, and other noted personages of the day figure in its pages. It is said that its author received £20,000 for the novel from Messrs. Longman; and that it speedily

* Curiously enough the same name is appropriated to Mr. D'Israeli himself, with the aliases of "*Young England*" and "*Harlequin*," by *Punch*, in 1845.

passed through many editions of a thousand each. A single firm in America is said to have sold 25,000 copies (doubtless pirated) within a month of its appearance; and the work has been translated not only into French, German, and Italian, but into Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, and Polish. "Lothair," was sharply criticised by the press, not only of this country, but also abroad.

The *Times* in a lengthy review of the work, says: "In its essence it is a novel of the day or of the future. Its themes are questions that engross society now, and may perhaps revolutionize it hereafter. If it is political in a fashion, its politics are cosmopolitan. The story carries us to London, Rome, Jerusalem, and each city gives scope in turn to the author's characteristic genius, and lends itself to the effects and contrasts that make the fascination of fiction. As may be surmised from the sacred ground where so much of the scene is laid, religious influences are the basis of the work—religion handled in a broad, catholic, and, we might say, popular manner. In one form or another it shapes the hero's career. It is at the bottom of the intrigues of which he is the object, of the events in which he plays a conspicuous part. A book thus conceived was clearly more likely to be a failure than a success. Nothing, generally speaking, can be more wearying than pages of controversy; the most tolerant of novel readers is ready to resent indignantly the attempt to foist upon him in the guise of light literature ponderous travesties of the writings of the fathers and school-

men. There are pages of controversy in 'Lothair,' and they are among the most interesting in the volumes. What makes 'Lothair,' as it has saved many poorer works, is its originality."

Blackwood was severely hostile in its remarks, and between that, and the Scotch press generally, and the over-partiality of the English, the neutrality of France may perhaps be accepted as a mediator. Here is what M. Edmund Scherer, the eminent French critic, wrote concerning it in the *Temps*. In his judgment, the views on all subjects which are set forth in "Lothair" are childish, the romantic interest of the story is feeble, the dialogue can scarcely be called original, and the characters are not striking. "Mr. D'Israeli," he adds, "was never a great writer, nor even a remarkable novelist; but the gifts which he lacked were supplied by a sort of *hablerie*, go, and *savoir faire*; and now even these qualities abandon him." The only person who will find much to reward him in "Lothair" is the man who is in quest of "little nothings and of amusing scandals."

The *North Londoner*, in a review of "Lothair," remarks:—"The manner in which modern politicians employ their leisure hours is a most favourable sign of our time. The old race of portly gentlemen, who were serious at night and gay all day, is quickly passing away, to be superseded by men of higher minds and more rational amusements. Lord Derby, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. D'Israeli afford proofs of our assertion. In the heroic verse of Homer, Lord Derby and Mr. Gladstone find a

source of recreation from political anxiety, and Mr. D'Israeli obtains relief still nearer at home in the exercise of his own vivid and ingenious imagination."

In the "general preface" to the collected edition of his works, which was published in 1870, and to which we have already referred, Mr. D'Israeli gave the following account of himself as a novelist, and of the reception which had been accorded to his various literary labours. Though it largely repeats what has already been written above, it deserves to be placed on record *in extenso*, as an important chapter of the writer's autobiography:—

"An American gentleman, with more than courtesy, has forwarded to me a vast number of notices of "Lothair" which have appeared in the leading journals of his country. He tells me that, irrespective of literary 'organs,' there are in the Union 5,000 newspapers, and it is not impossible that some notice of 'Lothair' might appear in each of these. However various may be the opinions of those which I thus possess, they appear to me generally to be sincere, and in point of literary ability, taste, style, and critical acumen, I think they need not fear competition with the similar productions of our own land."

"My English publishers also have made a collection of the notices of this work in our own country, and though we have not yet 5,000 newspapers, the aggregate of articles is in amount perhaps unprecedented. I have nothing to complain of in their remarks. One could hardly expect at home the

judicial impartiality of a foreign land. Personal influences inevitably mingle in some degree with such productions. There are critics who, abstractedly, do not approve of successful books, particularly if they have failed in the same style; social acquaintances also of lettered taste, and especially cotemporaries whose public life has not exactly realized the vain dreams of their fussy existence, would seize the accustomed opportunity of welcoming with affected discrimination about nothing, and elaborate controversy about trifles, the production of a friend; and there is always, both in politics and literature, the race of the Dennises, the Oldmixons, the Curls, who flatter themselves that by systematically libelling some eminent personage of their times, they have a chance of descending to posterity; but, so far as I am concerned, they have always been disappointed.

"A distinguished individual has suggested that, in a preface to this edition of my collected works, I might give my own views of the purport of 'Lothair.' It strikes me, with all deference, that it would be not a little presumptuous for an author thus to be the self-critic of volumes which appeared only a few months ago. Their purport to the writer seems clear enough, and as they have been more extensively read both by the people of the United Kingdom and the United States than any work that has appeared for the last half-century, I will even venture to assume that on this point they are of the same opinion as myself.

"But, of some other works, the youngest of

which were written a quarter of a century ago, it would, perhaps, be in me not impertinent now to make a few remarks. 'Coningsby,' 'Sybil,' and 'Tancred,' form a real Trilogy; that is to say, they treat of the same subject, and endeavour to complete that treatment. The origin and character of our political parties, their influence on the condition of the people of this country, some picture of the moral and physical condition of that people, and some intimation of the means by which it might be elevated and improved, were themes which had long engaged my meditation.

"Born in a library, and trained from early childhood by learned men who did not share the passions and the prejudices of our political and social life, I had imbibed on some subjects conclusions different from those which generally prevail, and especially with reference to the history of our own country. How an oligarchy had been substituted for a kingdom, and a narrow-minded and bigoted fanaticism flourished in the name of religious liberty, were problems long to me insoluble, but which early interested me. But what most attracted my musing, even as a boy, were the elements of our political parties, and the strange mystification by which that which was national in its constitution had become odious, and that which was exclusive was presented as popular.

"What has mainly led to this confusion of public thought and this uneasiness of society is our habitual carelessness in not distinguishing between the excellence of a principle and its injurious or

obsolete application. The feudal system may have worn out, but its main principle, that the tenure of property should be the fulfilment of duty, is the essence of good government. The divine right of kings may have been a plea for feeble tyrants, but the divine right of government is the keystone of human progress, and without it governments sink into police and a nation is degraded into a mob.

“National institutions were the ramparts of the multitude against large estates exercising political power derived from a limited class. The Church was in theory, and once it had been in practice, the spiritual and intellectual trainer of the people. The privileges of the multitude and the prerogatives of the Sovereign had grown up together, and together they had waned. Under the plea of Liberalism, all the institutions which were the bulwarks of the multitude had been sapped and weakened, and nothing had been substituted for them. The people were without education, and, relatively to the advance of science and the comfort of the superior classes, their condition had deteriorated, and their physical quality as a race was threatened. Those who in theory were the national party, and who sheltered themselves under the institutions of the country against the oligarchy, had, both by a misconception and a neglect of their duties, become, and justly become, odious; while the oligarchy, who had mainly founded themselves on the plunder of the popular estate, either in the shape of the possessions of the Church or the domains of the Crown, had by the patronage of certain general

principles which they only meagrely applied, assumed, and to a certain degree acquired, the character of a popular party. But no party was national ; one was exclusive and odious, and the other liberal and cosmopolitan.

“The perverse deviations of, political parties from their original significance may at first sight seem only subjects of historical curiosity, but they assume a different character when they practically result in the degradation of a people.

“To change back the oligarchy into a generous aristocracy round a real throne ; to infuse life and vigour into the Church as the trainer of the nation, by the revival of Convocation, then dumb, on a wide basis, and not, as has been since done, in the shape of a priestly section ; to establish a commercial code on the principles successfully negotiated by Lord Bolingbroke at Utrecht, and which, though baffled at the time by a Whig Parliament, were subsequently and triumphantly vindicated by his political pupil and heir, Mr. Pitt ; to govern Ireland according to the policy of Charles I. and not of Oliver Cromwell ; to emancipate the political constituency of 1832 from its sectarian bondage and contracted sympathies ; to elevate the physical as well as the moral condition of the people, by establishing that labour required regulation as much as property ; and all this rather by the use of ancient forms and the restoration of the past than by political revolutions founded on abstract ideas, appeared to be the course which the circumstances of this country required, and which, practically

speaking, could only, with all their faults and backslidings, be undertaken and accomplished by a reconstructed Tory party.

“When I attempted to enter public life, I expressed these views, long meditated, to my countrymen, but they met with little encouragement. He who steps out of the crowd is listened to with suspicion or with heedlessness; and 40 years ago there prevailed a singular ignorance of the political history of our country. I had no connection either in the Press or in public life. I incurred the accustomed penalty of being looked on as a visionary, and what I knew to be facts were treated as paradoxes.

“Ten years afterwards affairs had changed. I had been some time in Parliament and had friends who had entered public life with myself, and who listened always with interest and sometimes with sympathy to views which I had never ceased to enforce. Living much together, without combination we acted together. Some of those who were then my companions have, like myself, since taken some part in the conduct of public affairs; two of them, and those who were not the least interested in our speculations, have departed. One was George Smythe, afterwards seventh Lord Strangford, a man a brilliant gifts, of dazzling wit, infinite culture, and fascinating manners. His influence over youth was remarkable, and he could promulgate a new faith with graceful enthusiasm. Henry Hope, the eldest son of the author of ‘Anastasius,’ was of a different nature, but he was learned and

accomplished, possessed a penetrating judgment and an inflexible will. Master of a vast fortune, his house naturally became our frequent rendezvous; and it was at the Deepdene that he first urged the expediency of my treating in a literary form those views and subjects which were the matter of our frequent conversation.

“This was the origin of ‘Coningsby, or the New Generation,’ which I commenced under his roof, and which I inscribed to his name.

“The derivation and character of political parties, the condition of the people which had been the consequence of them, the duties of the Church as a main remedial agency in our present state, were the three principal topics which I intended to treat, but I found they were too vast for the space I had allotted to myself.

“These were all launched in ‘Coningsby;’ but the origin and condition of political parties, the first portion of the theme, was the only one completely handled in that work.

“Next year (1845), in ‘Sybil, or the Two Nations,’ I considered the condition of the people, and the whole work, generally speaking, was devoted to that portion of my scheme. At that time the Chartist agitation was still fresh in the public memory, and its repetition was far from improbable. I had mentioned to my friend, the late Thomas Duncombe, and who was my friend before I entered the House of Commons, something of what I was contemplating; and he offered and obtained for my perusal the whole of the correspondence of Feargus

O'Connor when conductor of the *Northern Star*, with the leaders and chief actors of the Chartist movement. I had visited and observed with care all the localities introduced; and as an accurate and never exaggerated picture of a remarkable period in our domestic history, and of a popular organization which in its extent and completeness has perhaps never been equalled, the pages of 'Sybil,' may, I venture to believe, be consulted with confidence.

"In recognizing the Church as a powerful agent in the previous development of England, and possibly the most efficient means of that renovation of the national spirit which was desired, it seemed to me that the time had arrived when it became my duty to ascend to the origin of that great ecclesiastical corporation, and consider the position of the descendants of that race who had been the founders of Christianity. Some of the great truths of ethnology were necessarily involved in such discussions. Familiar as we all are now with such themes, the House of Israel being now freed from the barbarism of mediæval misconception, and judged, like all other races, by their contributions to the existing sum of human welfare, and the general influence of race on human action being universally recognized as the key of history, the difficulty and hazard of touching for the first time on such topics cannot now be easily appreciated. But public opinion recognized both the truth and sincerity of these views, and, with its sanction, in 'Tancred, or the New Crusade,' the third portion of the trilogy, I completed their development.

“It will be seen that the general spirit of these productions ran counter to the views which had been long prevalent in England, and which may be popularly, though not altogether accurately, described as utilitarian. They recognized imagination in the government of nations as a quality not less important than reason. They trusted much to a popular sentiment, which rested on an heroic tradition and was sustained by the high spirit of a free aristocracy. Their economic principles were not unsound, but they looked upon the health and knowledge of the multitude as not the least precious part of the wealth of nations. In asserting the doctrine of race, they were entirely opposed to the equality of man and similar abstract dogmas which have destroyed ancient society without creating a satisfactory substitute. Resting on popular sympathies and popular privileges, they held that no society could be durable unless it was built upon the principles of loyalty and religious reverence.

“The writer and those who acted with him looked, then, upon the Anglican Church as a main machinery by which these results might be realized. There were few great things left in England, and the Church was one. Nor do I now doubt that if, a quarter of a century ago, there had arisen a Churchman equal to the occasion, the position of ecclesiastical affairs in this country would have been very different from that which they now occupy. But these great matters fell into the hands of monks and schoolmen; and little more than a year after the publication of ‘Coningsby,’ the secession

of Dr. Newman dealt a blow to the Church of England under which it still reels. That extraordinary event has been 'apologized' for, but has never been explained. It was a mistake and a misfortune. The tradition of the Anglican Church was powerful. Resting on the Church of Jerusalem, modified by the divine school of Galilee, it would have found that rock of truth which Providence, by the instrumentality of the Semitic race, had promised to St. Peter. Instead of that, the seceders sought refuge in mediæval superstitions, which are generally only the embodiments of pagan ceremonies and creeds.

"It cannot be denied that the aspect of the world and this country, to those who have faith in the spiritual nature of man, is at this time dark and distressful. They listen to doubts, and even denials, of an active Providence; what is styled materialism is in the ascendant. To those who believe that an atheistical society, though it may be polished and amiable, involves the seeds of anarchy, the prospect is full of gloom.

"This disturbance in the mind of nations has been occasioned by two causes—firstly, by the powerful assault on the divinity of the Semitic literature by the Germans; and, secondly, by recent discoveries of science, which are hastily supposed to be inconsistent with our long-received convictions as to the relations between the Creator and the created.

"One of the consequences of the Divine Government of this world, which has ordained that the

sacred purposes should be effected by the instrumentality of various human races, must be occasionally a jealous discontent with the revelation entrusted to a particular family. But there is no reason to believe that the Teutonic rebellion of this century against the Divine truths intrusted to the Semites will ultimately meet with more success than the Celtic insurrection of the preceding age. Both have been sustained by the highest intellectual gifts that human nature has ever displayed; but when the tumult subsides, the Divine truths are found to be not less prevalent than before, and simply because they are divine. Man brings to the study of the oracles more learning and more criticism than of yore; and it is well that it should be so. The documents will yet bear a greater amount both of erudition and examination than they have received; but the word of God is eternal, and will survive the spheres.

“The sceptical effects of the discoveries of science and the uneasy feeling that they cannot co-exist with our old religious convictions have their origin in the circumstance that the general body who have suddenly become conscious of these physical truths are not so well acquainted as is desirable with the past history of men. Astonished by their unprepared emergence from ignorance to a certain degree of information, their amazed intelligence takes refuge in the theory of what is conveniently called Progress, and every step in scientific discovery seems further to remove them from the path of primæval inspiration. But there

is no fallacy so flagrant as to suppose that the modern ages have the peculiar privilege of scientific discovery, or that they are distinguished as the epochs of the most illustrious inventions. On the contrary, scientific invention has always gone on simultaneously with the revelation of spiritual truths; and more, the greatest discoveries are not those of modern ages. No one for a moment can pretend that printing is so great a discovery as writing, or algebra as language. What are the most brilliant of our chymical discoveries compared with the invention of fire and the metals? It is a vulgar belief that our astronomical knowledge dates only from the recent century, when it was rescued from the monks who imprisoned Galileo; but Hipparchus, who lived before the Divine Teacher of Galilee, and who, among other sublime achievements, discovered the precession of the equinoxes, ranks with the Newtons and the Keplers; and Copernicus, the modern father of our celestial science, avows himself, in his famous work, as only the champion of Pythagoras, whose system he enforces and illustrates. Even the most modish schemes of the day on the origin of things, which captivate as much by their novelty as their truth, may find their precursors in ancient sages, and, after a careful analysis of the blended elements of imagination and induction which characterize the new theories, they will be found mainly to rest on the atom of Epicurus and the monad of Thales. Scientific like spiritual truth has ever from the beginning been descending from Heaven to man.

He is a being who organically demands direct relations with his Creator, and he would not have been so organized if his requirements could not be satisfied. We may analyze the sun and penetrate the stars, but man is conscious that he is made in God's own image, and in his perplexity he will ever appeal to our Father which art in Heaven.

"I had been in Parliament seven years when this Trilogy was published, and during that period I had not written anything; but in 1837, the year I entered the House of Commons, I had published two works, 'Henrietta Temple' and 'Venetia.' These are not political works, but they would commemorate feelings more enduring than public passions, and they were written with care, and some delight. They were inscribed to two friends, the best I ever had, and not the least gifted. One was the inimitable D'Orsay, the most accomplished and the most engaging character that has figured in this century, who, with the form and universal genius of an Alcibiades, combined a brilliant wit and a heart of quick affection, and who, placed in a public position, would have displayed a courage, a judgment, and a commanding intelligence which would have ranked him with the leaders of mankind. The other was one who had enjoyed that public opportunity which had been denied to Comte d'Orsay. The world has recognized the political courage, the versatile ability, and the masculine eloquence of Lord Lyndhurst, but his intimates only were acquainted with the tenderness of his disposition, the sweet-

ness of his temper, his ripe scholarship, and the playfulness of his bright and airy spirit.

“And here I cannot refrain from mentioning that in 1837 I accompanied Lord Lyndhurst to Kensington Palace, when, on the accession of the Queen, the peers and privy councillors and chief personages of the realm pledged their fealty to their new Sovereign. He was greatly affected by the unusual scene: a youthful maiden receiving the homage of her subjects, most of them illustrious, in a palace in a garden, and all with a sweet and natural dignity. He gave me, as we drove home, an animated picture of what had occurred in the Presence Chamber, marked by all that penetrating observation and happy terseness of description which distinguished him. Eight years afterwards, with my memory still under the influence of his effective narrative, I reproduced the scene in ‘Sybil,’ and I feel sure it may be referred to for its historical accuracy.

“There was yet a barren interval of five years of my life, so far as literature was concerned, between the publication of ‘Henrietta Temple’ and ‘Venetia,’ and my earlier works. In 1832 I had published ‘Contarini Fleming’ and ‘Alroy.’ I had then returned from two years of travel in the Mediterranean regions, and I published ‘Contarini Fleming’ anonymously, and in the midst of a revolution. It was almost stillborn, and having written it with deep thought and feeling, I was naturally discouraged from further effort. Yet the youthful writer who may, like me, be inclined to despair

may learn also from my example not to be precipitate in his resolves. Gradually 'Contarini Fleming' found sympathizing readers; Goethe and Beckford were impelled to communicate their unsolicited opinions of this work to its anonymous author, and I have seen a criticism on it by Heine, of which any writer might be justly proud. Yet all this does not prevent me from being conscious that it would have been better if a subject so essentially psychological had been treated at a more mature period of life.

"I had commenced 'Alroy' the year after my first publication, and had thrown the manuscript aside. Being at Jerusalem in the year 1831, and visiting the traditionary tombs of the kings, my thoughts recurred to the marvellous career which had attracted my boyhood, and I shortly after finished a work which I began the year after I wrote 'Vivian Grey.'

"What my opinion was of that my first work, written in 1826, was shown by my publishing my second anonymously. Books written by boys which pretend to give a picture of manners and to deal in knowledge of human nature must be affected. They can be, at the best, but the results of imagination acting on knowledge not acquired by experience. Of such circumstances exaggeration is a necessary consequence, and false taste accompanies exaggeration. Nor is it necessary to remark that a total want of art must be observed in such pages, for that is a failing incident to all first efforts. 'Vivian Grey' is essentially a puerile work, but it

has baffled even the efforts of its creator to suppress it. Its fate has been strange ; and not the least remarkable thing is, that forty-four years after its first publication I must ask the indulgence of the reader for its continued and inevitable reappearance. B. D.

“ Hughenden Manor, October, 1870 ”

In August, 1876, at the close of the session, the honour of a peerage was again offered to Mr. D'Israeli, and this time accepted by him ; and on the 21st of August, he was raised to the Upper House with the title of “ Earl of Beaconsfield and Viscount Hughenden, of Hughenden, in the county of Buckingham.”* The leadership of the Commons was then entrusted to Sir Stafford Northcote, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Beaconsfield himself, as the head of the Conservative party, taking the lead in the House of Lords.

* It is perhaps worthy of note that, in spite of their wealth and their ambition, the D'Israelis had never entered the arms in the Heralds' College, London, until August, 1876, when Mr D'Israeli was raised to the Peerage. On this occasion the following armorial bearings were granted by the College : Per saltire, gules and argent, a castle triple turretted in chief, ppr, two lions rampant in fesse sable, and an eagle displayed in base or. For crest : Issuant from a wreath of oak a castle triple turretted, all ppr. For supporters Dexter, an eagle, and sinister, a lion, both or, and gorged with a collar gules, pendent therefrom an escutcheon of the last charged with a tower argent.

CHAPTER XI.

Abstract of the Reform Bill of 1867.

IN the Session of 1867, Mr. Disraeli succeeded in inducing his followers to accept a somewhat sweeping measure of Reform, which was practically based on household suffrage. The Queen's Speech had contained a vague reference to Reform, a reference, it has been stated, "which savoured more of angling for a policy than of responsible Ministerial engagement and responsibility." On this followed Mr. D'Israeli's announcement that he "disclaimed Ministerial responsibility and initiation entirely; that the Bill must be the Bill of the House, not of the Ministry. The following is an abstract of the Bill, as it was eventually passed :—

Occupation Franchise in Boroughs.

Every man shall, in and after the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, be entitled to be registered as a Voter, and, when registered, to vote for a Member or Members to serve in Parliament for a Borough, who is qualified as follows : He must be of full age ; and is on the last day of July in any year, and has during the whole of the preceding twelve calendar months, been an Inhabitant Occupier, as an owner or tenant, of any

dwelling-house within the borough ; and has during the time of such occupation been rated as an ordinary occupier in respect of the premises so occupied by him within the borough to all rates (if any) made for the relief of the poor in respect of such premises ; and has on or before the twentieth day of July in the same year paid an equal amount in the pound to that payable by other ordinary occupiers in respect of all Poor Rates that have become payable by him in respect of the said premises up to the preceding fifth day of January :

Provided that no man shall under this section be entitled to be registered as a voter by reason of his being a joint occupier of any dwelling-house.

Lodger Franchise in Boroughs.

Every man shall, in and after the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, be entitled to be registered as a voter, and when registered to vote for a member or members to serve in Parliament for a borough, who is qualified as follows :

He must be of full age, and as a lodger, has occupied in the same borough, separately and as sole tenant for the twelve months preceding the last day of July in any year the same lodgings, such lodgings being part of one and the same dwelling-house, and of a clear yearly value, if let unfurnished, of ten pounds or upwards ; and has resided in such lodgings during the twelve months immediately preceding the last day of July, and has claimed to be registered as a voter at the next ensuing registration of voters,

First Registration of Occupiers.

Where any occupier of a dwelling-house or other tenement would be entitled to be registered as an occupier in pursuance of this Act at the first registration of Parliamentary voters to be made after the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven, if he had been rated to the poor rate for the whole of the required period, such occupier shall, notwithstanding he may not have been rated prior to the twenty-ninth day of September one thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven as an ordinary occupier be entitled to be registered, subject to the following conditions :—

Having been duly rated as an ordinary occupier to all poor rates in respect of the premises after the liability of the owner to be rated to the poor rate has ceased, under the provisions of this Act ;

That he has on or before the twentieth day of July one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight paid all poor rates which have become payable by him as an ordinary occupier up to the preceding fifth day of January.

Property Franchise in Counties.

Every man shall, in and after the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, be entitled to be registered as a Voter, and when registered, to Vote for a Member or Members to serve in Parliament for a County, who is qualified as follows :—He must be of full Age, and not subject to any legal incapacity ; and is seised at Law or in Equity of any Lands or Tenements of Freehold, Copyhold,

or any other Tenure whatever, for his own life, or for the life of another, or for any lives whatsoever, or for any larger Estate of the clear yearly value of not less than five pounds over and above all rents and charges payable out of or in respect of the same, or who is entitled, either as Lessee or Assignee, to any Lands or Tenements of Freehold, or of any other Tenure whatever, for the unexpired residue, whatever it may be, of any term originally created for a period of not less than sixty years of the clear yearly value of not less than five pounds over and above all rents and charges payable out of or in respect of the same: Provided that no person shall be registered as a Voter under this section unless he has complied with the provisions of the twenty-sixth section of the Act of the second year of the Reign of His Majesty William the Fourth, Chapter Forty-five.

Registration of Voters.

The Overseers of every Parish or Township shall cause to be made out a list of all persons who are entitled to vote for a county in respect of the occupation of premises of a clear yearly value of not less than ten pounds:

The claim of every person desirous of being registered as a voter for a member or members to serve for any borough in respect of the occupation of lodgings, shall be in a form provided by the Overseer, and every such claim shall after the last day of July, and on or before the 25th day of

August, be delivered to the overseers of the parish in which such lodgings shall be situate, and the particulars of such claim shall be published by such overseers on or before the first day of September next ensuing in a separate list.

*Occupation Franchise in Counties, and time for
Paying Rates.*

Every man shall, in and after the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, be entitled to be registered as a Voter, and when registered to Vote for a Member or Members to serve in Parliament for a County, who is qualified as follows :—

He must be of full age, and is on the last day of July in any year, and has during the twelve months preceding, been the Occupier, as Owner or Tenant of Lands or Tenements within the County, of the rateable value of twelve pounds or upwards ; and has during the time of such occupation been rated in respect to the premises so occupied by him to all rates (if any) made for the relief of the poor in respect of the said premises ; and has on or before the twentieth day of July in the same year paid all Poor Rates that have become payable by him in respect of the said premises up to the preceding fifth day of January.

Successive Occupation.

It is enacted that different premises occupied in immediate succession by any person as owner or

tenant during the twelve calendar months next previous to the last day of July in any year shall, unless as herein is otherwise provided, have the same effect in qualifying such person to vote for a county or borough as a continued occupation of the same premises in the manner herein provided.

Notice of Rate in Arrear to be given to Voters.

It is enacted where any Poor Rate due on the fifth day of January from an occupier in respect of premises capable of conferring the franchise for a borough remains unpaid on the first day of June following, the overseers shall give notice, on or before the 20th of the same month of June, unless such rate has previously been paid or has been duly demanded by a demand note.

At a contested election for any county or borough represented by three members no person shall vote for more than two candidates.

Rates to be Deducted from Rent.

That when the occupier under a tenancy subsisting at the time of the passing of this Act of any dwelling-house or other tenement which has been let to him free from rates is rated and has paid rates in pursuance of this Act, he may deduct from any rent due from him in respect of the said dwelling-house or other tenement any amount paid by him on account of the rates to which he may be rendered liable by this Act.

*One Member to be Returned to the following
Boroughs.*

Andover	Guildford	New Maldon
Bridport	Great Marlow	Newport
Buckingham	Huntingdon	(I. of W.)
Bridgnorth	Honiton	Poole
Bodmin	Harwich	Richmond
Chipping	Hertford	Ripon
Wycombe	Knarsborough	Stamford
Chippenham	Lymington	Thetford
Cockermouth	Leominster	Tewkesbury
Chichester	Ludlow	Tavistock
Cirencester	Lewes	Wells
Dorchester	Lichfield	Windsor
Devizes	Malton	
Evesham	Marlborough	

New Boroughs.

MIDDLESEX: *Chelsea*—Parishes of Chelsea, Fulham, Hammersmith and Kensington.

DURHAM: *Darlington*—Townships of Darlington, Haughton-le-Skerne, and Cockerton.

The Hartlepoons—Municipal Borough of Hartlepool. Townships of Throston, Stranton and Seaton Carew.

Stockton—Municipal Borough of Stockton, and the Township of Thornaby.

KENT: *Gravesend*—Parishes of Gravesend, Milton and Northfleet.

LANCASHIRE: *Burnley*—Townships of Burnley and Habergham Eaves.

LANCASHIRE AND CHESHIRE: *Staleybridge*—

Municipal Borough of Staleybridge; remaining portion of township of Dukinfield, the township of Stalley, and the district of the Local Board of Health at Mossley.

STAFFORDSHIRE: *Wednesbury*—Parishes of Wednesbury, West Bromwich and Tipton.

YORKSHIRE (NORTH RIDING): *Middlesborough*—Township of Linthorpe, and so much of the townships of Middlesborough, Ormesby, and Eston, as lie to the north of the road leading from Eston towards Yarm.

WEST RIDING: *Dewsbury*—The Townships of Dewsbury, Batley and Soothill.

New Boroughs formed by Division of the Borough of the Tower Hamlets.

BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS: Parish of St. George's-in-the-East, Hamlet of Mile End Old Town, Poplar Union, Stepney Union, Whitechapel Union, the Tower of London.

BOROUGH OF HACKNEY: Parish of St John, Hackney, Parish of St. Matthew, Bethnal Green, and the Parish of St. Leonard, Shoreditch.

It will be seen from the above abstract that the Bill provided to a very large extent for what have been called "three-cornered constituencies."

CHAPTER XII.

The Royal Titles Bill—The Berlin Treaty—Annexation of Cyprus—The Berlin Congress—Turnerelli's Wreath—The Afghan War—The Zulu War—Dissolution of Parliament.

SOON after the opening of the session of 1876, the Premier brought in the Royal Titles Bill, by which he added to the other titles of Her Majesty the Queen that of "Empress of India."

As time wore on, the Turkish difficulty increased, the Sultan was deposed, and Eastern Europe was rife with war. Early in 1878, owing to their unwillingness to encounter the chance of hostilities on behalf of Turkey, the Earl of Carnarvon, Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the Earl of Derby, Foreign Secretary, resigned their respective offices in the Ministry; and shortly afterwards it became known abroad that a secret treaty had been concluded between Great Britain and Turkey, by which a British protectorate had been established over Asia Minor, and Cyprus was ceded by the Sultan. Indeed, it may safely be added that the annexation of Cyprus and the assumption of the responsibilities of a protectorate in Asia, without any previous consultation of Parliament, by Lord Beaconsfield, are instances of the "Imperial instinct" which was so strong a feature of his character. The policy of the Government with regard to the signing of the Anglo-Turkish Convention, and the occupation of Cyprus, led to much discussion in

Parliament, and the Marquis of Hartington moved in the House of Commons a resolution directed against that policy; but, after a debate of four nights, the action of the Government was supported by a majority of 143, there being 195 votes for the resolution and 338 against it.

In June the Earl of Beaconsfield and the Marquis of Salisbury, Foreign Secretary, attended, as representatives of England, a Congress at Berlin, held for the settlement of the Eastern difficulty. Their return to England, at the close of the Congress, was made the occasion for an ovation on the part of their political friends and admirers. The west end of London, on the day of their arrival at Charing Cross Railway Station, was *en fête* with flags and laurels. The roadway from the station to the official residence of the Premier in Downing Street was thronged by thousands of persons, whose enthusiasm went almost beyond bounds, in their eagerness to welcome back the two representatives. One of Lord Beaconsfield's first utterances, on reaching London, was, that they had successfully accomplished the purposes of their Mission by bringing about "peace with honour." Notwithstanding this somewhat boastful assertion, we have the impartial testimony of Bismarck himself that the spirited stand of Lord Beaconsfield at the Berlin Congress saved this country from war.

In no European capital was Lord Beaconsfield more appreciated and honoured than at Berlin. Prince Bismarck, conversing with a well-known diplomatist not long ago in his private cabinet, observed to him, as he pointed to the walls, "There

hangs the portrait of my Emperor, there that of my wife, and there you see that of Lord Beaconsfield."

In order to mark the sense of obligation under which the country lay towards Lord Beaconsfield for the part which he had to play in bringing the Eastern question to so favourable a termination, it was proposed by a public-spirited individual, but unknown in the world of politics—one Mr. Tracy Turnerelli—that his lordship should be presented with a golden wreath, the cost of which, it was suggested, should be defrayed by a public subscription; the several leaves forming the wreath, it was added, should be inscribed with the name of the different towns in which contributions had been collected. The wreath was in due course manufactured, but its acceptance by Lord Beaconsfield was politely and respectfully declined.

From August, 1876, down to February, 1878, Lord Beaconsfield had, in addition to his other offices, held that of Lord Privy Seal, to which, however, no great duties are attached.

Some anxiety with regard to his lordship was occasioned in 1879 by a severe attack of illness, and which prevented him for some time from attending in his accustomed place in the House of Lords; but he speedily recovered.

In 1879 the affairs of North-western India and Afghanistan next excited attention, and created a large amount of misgiving as to the foreign policy of the Government; but as Lord Beaconsfield assured his hearers at a Guildhall banquet, our movements in Afghanistan were solely for the purpose of establishing a "scientific frontier."

British troops were marched to Cabul, and the Amcer fled; next came the massacre of the English envoy, Sir Louis Cavagnari, and his suite; then the disaster in the Shutar-Garden Pass, and the long series of engagements which followed, ending with the capture of Candahar by Sir Frederick Roberts, only to be subsequently evacuated by the Liberal party when they came into power.

While all these matters were taking place, a Zulu war in South Africa was likewise engaging the attention of the nation. This war was mainly brought about through the bold action of Sir Bartle Frere, High Commissioner of Natal, in direct opposition to the will of the country at large, and commenced without the sanction of the Government. The war was undertaken in order to crush the power of Cetewayo, the Zulu king, which, it was believed by some, was a standing menace to the Colony. The Home Government was requested to send out troops, which was accordingly done; but Sir Bartle Frere had in the meantime taken the initiative, and it soon became apparent that he was going faster than the Government desired. Notwithstanding the precipitate imprudence on the part of Sir Bartle Frere, the Government ultimately acquiesced in the Zulu War, apparently feeling convinced that it was the wiser course to attack Cetewayo on his own ground, than to suffer him to steal a march upon our army and invade our South African territory.

The Budget of 1879 showed an enormous deficit, and gave rise to feelings of general alarm, the

result of which was that the Government rapidly became unpopular; this feeling was intensified, perhaps, rather than otherwise, by the introduction of a Bill empowering the State to purchase the stock of the Metropolitan Water Companies on terms which the public thought exorbitant. The favourable results of the bye-elections which had taken place just previously at Liverpool, Sheffield, and Southwark, created a feeling of security in the minds of Lord Beaconsfield and his colleagues as to the successful result of a General Election, and in the month of March a dissolution of Parliament was resolved upon. This step was proclaimed by Lord Beaconsfield in a manifesto, issued in the form of a letter to the Duke of Marlborough, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. It was published on the 9th of March, and ran as follows:—

10, Downing Street, March 8, 1880.

“MY LORD DUKE,—The measures respecting the state of Ireland, which her Majesty’s Government so anxiously considered with your Excellency, and in which they were much aided by your advice and authority, are now about to be submitted for the Royal Assent, and it is at length in the power of the Ministers to advise the Queen to recur to the sense of her people. The arts of agitators, which represented that England, instead of being the generous and sympathizing friend, was indifferent to the dangers and the sufferings of Ireland, have been defeated by the measures, at once liberal and prudent, which Parliament has almost unanimously sanctioned. During the six years of the present

Administration, the improvement of Ireland and the content of our fellow-countrymen in that island have much occupied the care of the Ministry, and they may remember with satisfaction that in this period they have solved one of the most difficult problems connected with its government and people, by establishing a system of public education open to all classes and all creeds. Nevertheless, a danger, in its ultimate results scarcely less disastrous than pestilence and famine, and which now engages your Excellency's anxious attention, distracts that country. A portion of its population is attempting to sever the Constitutional tie which unites it to Great Britain in that bond which has favoured the power and prosperity of both. It is to be hoped that all men of light and leading will resist this destructive doctrine. The strength of this nation depends on the unity of feeling which should pervade the United Kingdom and its widespread dependencics. The first duty of an English Minister should be to consolidate that co-operation which renders irresistible a community educated, as our own, in an equal love of liberty and law. And yet there are some who challenge the expediency of the Imperial character of this realm. Having attempted, and failed, to enfeeble our Colonies by their policy of decomposition, they may perhaps now recognize in the disintegration of the United Kingdom a mode which will not only accomplish, but precipitate, their purpose. The immediate dissolution of Parliament will afford an opportunity to the nation to decide upon a course which will

materially influence its future fortunes and shape its destiny. Rarely in this century has there been an occasion more critical. The power of England and the peace of Europe will largely depend on the verdict of the country. Her Majesty's present Ministers have hitherto been enabled to secure that peace, so necessary to the welfare of all civilized countries, and so peculiarly the interest of our own. But this ineffable blessing cannot be obtained by the passive principle of non-interference. Peace rests on the presence, not to say the ascendancy, of England in the councils of Europe. Even at this moment, the doubt, supposed to be inseparable from popular election, if it does not diminish, certainly arrests her influence, and is a main reason for not delaying an appeal to the national voice. Whatever may be its consequence to Her Majesty's present advisers, may it return to Westminster a Parliament not unworthy of the power of England, and resolved to maintain it!—I have the honour to be, my Lord Duke, your faithful servant,

“BEACONSFIELD.”

On the 24th of March, 1880, Parliament was dissolved, and Lord Beaconsfield and his “spirited foreign policy” were once more submitted to the verdict of the country. At the general election in the following month it was found that the Liberals had achieved such a decided victory, that Lord Beaconsfield resolved on resigning, and relegated himself to the Opposition benches, whilst Mr. Gladstone was once more appointed Premier.

“During his second Premiership,” observes the *Daily News*, “Lord Beaconsfield found relief from part of the fatiguing work of leadership in the House of Commons by transferring to the hands of Lord Barrington the task of writing to the Queen the despatches narrating the course of debate, which it has been the usage during successive reigns for the Ministerial leader to furnish to the Sovereign. Lord Barrington, whose devoted attachment to his chief has been shown by self-denying and vigilant attendance on him during the long illness which has now fatally terminated, is one of the very few men living to whom Lord Beaconsfield, during the late years of his life, was known in something more than political intimacy. His calm and intelligent judgment of men and things was often probably of greater service to Lord Beaconsfield than the advice of men of higher official rank, and more hotly engaged in party warfare.”

Before quitting office Lord Beaconsfield dispensed the favours which were at his disposal with a somewhat unsparing hand ; raising two of his chief supporters in the House of Peers to Earldoms, and bestowing a Barony on Mr. Baillie-Cochrane, his old friend and colleague among the “Young England” party, and dealing out alike honour to Lord Barrington, M.P., and to Mr. Montagu Corry, who had been his constant friends and companions since the death of his wife.

As the *Times* remarks, “the history of Lord Beaconsfield’s last administration is as yet too near us to be viewed in just perspective ;” but this at

least may be said without fear of contradiction that the allegiance of the party in power from 1874 to 1880 was as loyal and unshaken to its chief as that of any body of English politicians who ever followed a leader. . . . Nor is it possible to deny that, for a while at least, Lord Beaconsfield then spoke with the voice of England. In the official and responsible conduct of business it may be true, as has been often asserted, that his faults stood revealed to the world, that he showed his rooted incapacity for apprehending the ideas and anticipating the wishes of the majority of the English electors, that his incompetence to master details became conspicuous, and that his inconsistency, the praise or blame of which he shares with most of our illustrious statesmen, was rudely unveiled. It is certain, nevertheless, that Lord Beaconsfield, despite his alien origin and the 'detachment' of his intellect, was able at a momentous crisis in European affairs to stand forth as the authentic and courageous spokesman of the country which he ruled."

After his retirement from the cares of office, Lord Beaconsfield spent much of his time in the seclusion of Hughenden, where he was visited by Her Majesty, once at least, and also by the Prince of Wales.

CHAPTER XIII.

HIS Lordship's Wit and Humour—Publishes "Endymion"
—Unity in his Character and Political Views—His
Residence in Curzon Street—His Last Appearance in
the House of Lords.

ONE of the great points in Lord Beaconsfield's speeches, whether in Parliament, or upon the hustings, or at an ordinary public meeting, was seen in the felicitous flashes of wit and repartee for which he was famous, and the wondrous power of inventing epithets which he possessed. The comparison of Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues, as they sat in the House of Commons, to a "range of exhausted volcanoes," is one which will long be remembered. And the epigram was not spoiled, as is the fate of most, by its further development. "Not a flame flickers on a single palled crest," said Mr. D'Israeli, carrying on the idea; "but the situation is still dangerous. There are occasional earthquakes; and ever and anon the dark rumbling of the sea."

Then, again, at the famous Edinburgh banquet in 1867, where he took credit to himself for having "educated" his party, there was the inimitable comparison of the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviews* to

the two old-fashioned rival posting-houses. They had both attacked his policy as dangerous, revolutionary, and precipitate. "So," said he, "may you behold the ostler at the Blue Lion and the chambermaid at the King's Arms, though bitter rivals in the bygone epoch of coaches and post-horses, making up their quarrels and condoling together in the street over their common enemy the railroad."

His comparison of the Melbourne Ministry to the famous equestrian Ducrow, who rode upon six horses at one time, we have already introduced to our readers. "Organized Hypocrisy" was succeeded by the admirable witticism—"He has caught the Wings bathing, and ran off with their clothes." Later on, referring to Peel's self-satisfied and pompous manner, and to his growing habit of arrogant dictation, he said—"Another place (the House of Lords) may be drilled into a guard-room, and the House of Commons may be degraded into a vestry." Again, in allusion to the curse of Ireland, he calls Peel, and follows up the epithet most wittily, "a great Parliamentary middle-man—a man who bamboozled one party and plundered the other, till having obtained a position to which he was not entitled, he cried out 'Let us have no party! Let us have fixity of tenure!'" Again, whether true or not, at all events somewhat ungenerously, he represents Peel's speeches as "dreary pages of interminable talk; full of predictions falsified, pledges broken, calculations that had gone wrong, and budgets that had blown up. And all this not relieved by a single original thought, a single generous, or a

single happy, expression." His taunt about his opponents "plundering and blundering" so frequently quoted from his celebrated "Bath letter" addressed to Lord Grey de Wilton in 1873, is among the latest examples of this epigrammatic style.

Lord Beaconsfield had been but a few months out of office, when the result of his leisure hours spent at Hughenden appeared in the form of an octavo novel, of the political class, entitled "Endymion." This work was not received with quite as much enthusiasm and excitement as had been accorded to "Lothair," and in some of the press-reviews of the book charges of plagiarism were directed against Lord Beaconsfield. A phrase or two bodily lifted into the book from "Historic Doubts," it was asserted, had been appropriated purely to the end of identifying the Hon. George Sydney Smythe with Waldershare. A writer in *Notes and Queries*, however, cheerfully exonerated his lordship from the charges of plagiarism which had been brought against him; at all events, so far as related to "Endymion." The following (unauthentic) "key" to "Endymion," appeared in the pages of *Notes and Queries* —

Zenobia	Lady Jersey.
Adriana Neufchatel	Lady Burdett-Coutts.
The Neufchatels	The Rothschilds.
Col. Albert (Prince Florestan)	Napoleon III.
Lord Rochampton	Lord Palmerston
Lord Rawchester	Earl Granville.
Earl of Beaumais	The late Earl of Derby.
Mr. Bertie Tremaine	Lord Houghton.
Count of Ferrol	Prince Bismarck.

Endymion	The Author.
Nigel Pennuddock	Cardinal Manning.
George Waldeshare	George Smythe.
Job Thornberry	Richard Cobden.
Hortensius	Sir W. Vernon Harcourt.
Sidney Wilton	Sidney Herbert.
Mr. Sainte Barbe	Thackeray.
Mr. Gushy	Dickens
Topsy-Turvy	<i>Vanity Fair.</i>
Scaramouch	<i>Punch.</i>

In a notice of his lordship, which appeared in the *Literary World*, shortly before his elevation to the Peerage, the writer observed—"We have no difference of opinion with Mr. D'Israeli's critic as to the unity which may be traced in his character and political views. If he has been inconsistent, or if he has been in disguise, these assertions apply to his party connections, not to his real personality, as discerned by those who read his early speeches and his books. From first to last he has been in the way of occasionally saying daring and extravagant things, and from first to last he has held a particular constitutional—we should think it more correct to say unconstitutional—theory, which may be called Radical or may be called Tory, but which has always been alien to common sense and to the real meaning and character of our political institutions. The theory in question is that which we may call popular sovereignty or Bonapartist imperialism. The sovereign is to be exceedingly powerful, but is to be the chosen of the people, or at least to be supported by the people. This was Bolingbroke's notion. It has a charm for young, ardent, confused

minds. But it is alien to the genius of our constitutional freedom, the idea of which is that the sovereignty is essentially representative, belonging to the nation, and represented not in any special sense by the king, but by the three estates of Parliament. Sober thinkers of the Whig school have always laughed to scorn the Bolingbroke theory as fanciful and unpractical, and Mr. D'Israeli has therefore at all times hated the Whigs."

In 1874 his lordship (then plain Benjamin D'Israeli) officiated at the unveiling of the statue of the late Lord Derby in Palace Yard; and some of the words which he uttered on that occasion ought to be remembered as well by those whose birth facilitates their entry into public life, as by others who have to fight their way to it:—

"We have raised this statue not only as a memorial but as an example; not merely to commemorate but to inspire." He who uttered these words had no advantages when he commenced his career which are not open to any man who has the ambition, the ability, and the determination to distinguish himself. The field is open, though the prize is not easy to obtain. In this free constitution there is no hindrance to ambition which adequate ability may not overcome. Mr. D'Israeli called attention to the three distinctive qualities of Lord Derby's character, and afterwards to the three salient achievements which illustrate his career. "His fiery eloquence," said the orator, "his haughty courage, and his rare powers of work, would have made him memorable under any

circumstances, and even without the factitious advantages of wealth and lineage with which he entered public life. . . . He is well placed where he is, fronting those council chambers in which he so long bore sway, and in which that history has been made of which he will for ever form a part."

It is singular, considering how much and how long he had mixed in society, how few allusions to him are to be found in the journals and diaries of recent celebrities. For instance it may be stated that no mention of D'Israeli is to be found in Charles Dickens' "Life," by Forster, except a brief record of the fact that he had met him during the last month of his life at dinner at Lord Stanhope's. In Macaulay's "Life," too, D'Israeli is scarcely mentioned. The following entry, under date of December, 1852, being apparently the only one: "I went to the House . . . heard a little of D'Israeli, who was clever, but inconclusive, and most unhandsome."

"From the character of Lord Beaconsfield's speeches," observes the *Daily News*, "and from the reported sayings of his which float up and down in society, the impression prevails that he was what is called a great talker. He did not, however, care to be so. In mixed society he was habitually and continuously silent, only now and then interposing with a phrase which impaled some absurd person or saying. Alone with one or two men or, better, women whom he liked, he talked freely and amusingly. Lord Beaconsfield makes

Endymion say that he owed all his success in life to the favour and friendship of women, and Lord Beaconsfield would probably have said the same in his own person. He had the art of winning their regard and affection. He found friends among women from poor Lady Blessington to ladies of the very highest rank and station, the most exemplary life, and the greatest authority and influence in society and in public affairs. The distrust with which he was once viewed at Court gave way when he became better known there to the completest confidence, and the strongest personal regard. Lord Beaconsfield had another remarkable gift—that of winning the confidence and affection of young men.”

“In 1877,” says the *Daily Telegraph*, “when the great statesman whom England mourns to-day spoke of retiring from office, the Duke of Argyll said ‘that was an intimation which could not but arouse the sympathy and interest of all who know him. In the generous contests of our public life we have no private grudges, no personal enmities.’ The sentiment so eloquently expressed on that occasion must be still more deeply felt by all parties now, when the retirement is final, complete, solemn, and irreversible. Again, in the very thick of fierce political warfare the motives of Lord Beaconsfield were assailed at some meeting in the country: and the Duke of Somerset, thrusting aside the accusation, exclaimed, ‘His motives were to leave behind him an honourable name.’ Throughout the lengthened period during which the late

Premier stood in the van of public men, he acted on this principle expressed by his political adversary, and none can truly say, not even those who differed from him most frequently, that he has not carried it out. 'The noble Earl,' said the Duke of Argyll, 'enjoys the affection of many around him—of the young men whom he has encouraged on their entering into public life, and the old men whom he has led against all hope, to victory and success.' These words mark two conspicuous traits in Lord Beaconsfield's character—his hearty sympathy with youth and ability of all kinds, and his boundless courage alike in adversity and triumph. No man ever fought more uphill battles, and none ever behaved better when they were won. The Conservative party, at all events, have owed to his patience and skill their tenures of power since 1846, and those whose lot it was to contend with them will never deny the great political qualities, the endurance, the vigour, the ability, and the unsurpassed pluck which he at all times manifested."

Apparently, even a few months ago, Lord Beaconsfield was looking forward to a "green old age"—as extended as that of his father and grandfather. At all events it was only in the autumn of last year that he took as his town-house, No. 19, Curzon Street, formerly the residence of Lord William Powlett, and more recently of the Earl of Tankerville. He furnished it in a thoroughly homely style, and began to occupy it during the fall. Alas! he was destined to be its inmate for only a few brief months.

At the beginning of the Parliamentary Session of 1881, Lord Beaconsfield took his accustomed place as the leader of the Opposition, but it was manifest to his friends that his health was not what it had been up to that time. In the autumn, he had been unwell, but he took little notice of the fact at the time, and his lordship went on transacting business in his ordinary manner. Even at the Congress of Berlin, in July, 1878, where he was the central figure of all, "the observed of all observers," as he walked along, leaning on the arm of his friend, Mr. Montagu Corry, it was noticed that he looked weary and ill.

Almost the last time that Lord Beaconsfield spoke at any great length in the House of Lords was about a month previous to his death, when he made a speech in the debate, brought forward by Lord Lytton, on the evacuation of Candahar, which lacked nought of his wonted power. His last utterance in the House of Lords was in support of the address of sympathy with the Emperor of Russia on his father's murder.

CHAPTER XIV.

His Illness and Death—Concluding Remarks.

DURING the last week of March, the first signs of his last fatal illness appeared. He had dined out four or five times in the course of the previous week, the last time being on Saturday, March 19, and had apparently caught a violent chill on leaving Marlborough House, where he had been the guest of the Prince of Wales. On the 28th his illness first assumed an alarming character. The *Times* inserted a paragraph announcing his illness, stating that there was some cause for anxiety. He had intended to spend part of the Easter recess with the young Duke of Portland, at Welbeck, the home of his old friend Lord George Bentinck; but his illness of course prevented this visit from being carried out.

On Monday, the 21st, the day after he was taken ill, he was to have sat to Mr. Millais for his portrait; but he was obliged to put off the engagement. It was to have been the fourth out of five sittings, and the portrait, therefore, remains to be finished from memory.

A medical report of Lord Beaconsfield's illness, by one of the physicians who was in constant attendance on his lordship, and of which the following is the substance, has been published:—It ap-

pears that he had for several years past suffered more or less from attacks of gout, complicated with bronchitis. While in office, his health was very far from strong, and people little suspected how ill and weak he really was, and how frequently he worked under the most trying circumstances in consequence of his weakly condition. No previous attack from which his lordship suffered was, however, anything like so severe or so prolonged as the one which has now proved fatal. His last illness began in the form of general bad health, and some months ago he was exceedingly feeble. Exactly thirty days previous to his death the noble earl felt so bad that he sent for his regular physician, Dr. Kidd, who continued to attend him till his death. Dr. Quain was also early called in for consultation, and subsequently Dr. Mitchell Bruce was summoned as physician in constant personal attendance during the intervals when the other medical men were away on their professional rounds.

The nature of this illness was the same as that from which Lord Beaconsfield had previously suffered. It was a regular attack of gout in several of the joints, complicated with severe bronchitis, and a certain deficiency in activity of the excreting organs, which had been a source of great difficulty to the doctors. On the day preceding his death it became too evident that the symptoms were increasing in severity. The weakness, which had naturally increased in the course of the illness, now became so great as to cause alarm. In the evening the failure in strength was very pronounced, and the doctors

were filled with grave anxiety as to what was to follow in the night. After one o'clock there was a rapid loss of strength, and the system did not respond to the methods of treatment employed. At two o'clock the condition of his lordship became so alarming that the doctors hastily summoned his intimate friends, and when he expired there were at his bedside Lord Rowton, Viscount Barrington, Sir Philip Rose, Dr. Quain, Dr. Kidd, and Dr. Bruce. He died calmly and peacefully, the failure of strength being gradual, at half-past four on Tuesday morning, April 19, the anniversary of the day on which twelve months previously he had left Windsor Castle, after tendering to Her Majesty his resignation as Prime Minister of England.*

The severe state of the weather, and the noble earl's advanced age, were the chief of the adverse features in the case against which the physicians had to contend—circumstances, of course, over which they had no control whatever. Throughout his illness Lord Beaconsfield was treated in his own personal rooms, of which there were four on one floor, and in either two of which there was communication by means of folding doors. They are spacious apartments, and were kept well ventilated. For change of scene and for purity of air, Lord Beaconsfield was wheeled from one room to another, the apartment he left being thoroughly ventilated ere he returned to it. This operation was conducted without the slightest exertion on the

* It may be remarked as a coincidence that the same day of April was that of Lord Byron's death.

part of the noble earl, whose bed (a beautifully-fitted structure, on large free-moving wheels) was simply pushed from one room to another by four men servants.

The services of four trained nurses from St. John's Home, in Norfolk Street, Strand, were sought and obtained, in order that his lordship's comfort might be carefully attended to; two of them in turn relieving the others, watching alternately by day and night.

The following incidents, during his lordship's last illness, we gather from the papers of the day:—During the early part of Lord Beaconsfield's illness little alarm was occasioned. Dr. Kidd, who had been his lordship's adviser for several years, entertained no immediate fears. However, the east winds which set in materially interfered with the progress of the patient's health, the noble earl having been attacked with asthmatic bronchitis. At the earlier stages of his illness he was able to take nourishment freely, and to enter into his ordinary political and business arrangements. In the absence of Lord Rowton, who had accompanied his sister, who was seriously ill, to the South of France, Lord Barrington took charge of the noble earl's affairs, and during their walks the ex-Premier exhibited evident signs of exhaustion. In fact, his lordship often stated that he felt too unwell to travel further, and, but for the assistance of Lord Barrington's arm, would have been unable to reach his home. Having once taken to his bed he was never able to leave it, except in moments when he

showed an extraordinary amount of vitality and strength. On those occasions he even managed to escape the observation of those who were in attendance. On one occasion when leaving his bed, an effort was made to induce him to return to it, and the reply was that he could not do so, as Jim, who was a favourite servant of his lordship's, was occupying it. This, of course, was a delusion on the part of the noble earl, and was the first symptom of a decaying intellect. After that, and for several days, Lord Beaconsfield expressed a strong desire to see Lord Rowton, and when his lordship arrived the doctors, who feared the excitement of an interview, peremptorily refused to allow him to proceed to the bedside, and for some days no interview took place. Before leaving Buckingham Palace for Osborne, her Majesty communicated with Lord Barrington her particular desire to visit the patient, but the reply of the physicians was that only quietude was likely to restore the noble earl, and they begged the Queen, under the circumstances, not to carry out her desire. For a long time Lord Beaconsfield was unable to take nourishment, but during the week preceding his death, he so improved in his digestive organs that solid food was administered, and at times he took it with apparent relish. At other times he turned from it, and, with some slight show of obstinacy, refused it. He bore the fatigue of his removal from room to room well, and frequently thanked those who had assisted him. Lord Beaconsfield lay in a drawing-room with folding doors, and was afterwards moved from one part

of it to another, the change of position appearing to give him comfort. Often after his removal his appetite appeared to improve, and within a day or two of his death he took solid nourishment, at first with avidity but afterwards reluctantly. This failing of the digestive powers accompanied by the recurrence of east winds would appear to account for his death. His condition had during the last month been most precarious, and his lordship's age was one which tried to the utmost the physicians, to whom he often expressed his thanks for the assistance they had rendered him in his severe attack. Over and over again, when his lordship was seized with fits of coughing he appeared to be on the point of choking, but by the appliances used and his willingness to accept advice his life was prolonged, and not many days before his death he not only conversed freely with Lord Rowton, Lord Barrington, and Sir Philip Rose, but actually had read to him a copy of a bulletin as to his health which was about to be issued. On this occasion he said jocosely to one of his physicians, "What have you said about me that the British public will read when they awake in the morning?" When asked whether he would like to hear, he said, "Yes." On a bulletin being read to him, which contained the words "takes nourishment well, and the strength is maintained," he remarked, with a smile, "I think the 'well' is a little too strong," and with regard to the last phrase he said, "No doubt you are conscious of its accuracy; I only wish I were." He, however, from the first

never entertained the slightest idea that he should recover, and that opinion he expressed to his attendants more than once. During his last illness he corrected his last speech in the House of Lords. In regard to this he showed that he was not unmindful of future fame, "I will not go down to posterity," he said, "at all events as talking bad grammar." On one of the last days in March he held in his room a meeting of some of his intimate political friends, and this was the last time on which he transacted any public business. He was conscious almost to the last. He saw Mr. Ralph D'Israeli, his brother, during the Sunday afternoon previous to his death, and after that slept calmly. During the evening he was restless, but was able at midnight to recognize Lord Rowton; after that he appeared to become unconscious, and his utterances were incoherent. In his last hours he was calm and peaceful, and free from pain.

In the course of the day on which Lord Beaconsfield died, Mr. Boehm, the celebrated sculptor, took a cast of the face of the deceased Earl for future reproduction. The expression of his countenance is said to have been as calm and peaceful as though he was slumbering peacefully.

The funeral arrangements were placed in the hands of Mr. Caswell, of Queen's Road, Chelsea, who also superintended the interment of Lady Beaconsfield. Mr. Caswell was called to Curzon Street at six o'clock on the morning of the Earl's death, and about nine o'clock at night the body was encased in a leaden coffin, with an elm interior

lined with white satin. With respect to his interment, the late earl has left the following in his last will, dated December 16th, 1878 :—

“I desire and direct that I may be buried in the same vault in the churchyard of Hughenden in which the remains of my late dear wife, Mary Anne D’Israchi, created in her own right Viscountess Beaconsfield, were placed, and that my funeral may be conducted with the same simplicity as hers was.”

On the morning of the earl’s death, Lord Rowton and Sir Philip Rose proceeded to Hughenden, with the view of searching the late Earl’s memoranda, and of ascertaining if he had left any written instructions, or expressed any wish, with regard to the place of his interment.

Lord Beaconsfield’s executors are Sir Philip Rose and Sir Nathaniel Rothschild; but it is understood that all his private papers are left to Lord Rowton, with full power to do what he thinks right with them.

The anxiety regarding his lordship’s last illness which was evinced by the country at large made itself manifest by the eagerness with which the bulletins were sought for. Almost from the commencement of his illness his residence in Curzon Street was daily and hourly besieged by anxious inquirers from Royalty downwards, for the latest intelligence as to the noble earl’s condition; and according as the bulletins were issued, they were at once telegraphed to the Queen, the Prince of Wales, and other members of the Royal Family.

The *Court Circular* of April 19 contained the

following message of condolence :—"The Queen received this morning, with feelings of the deepest sorrow, the sad intelligence of the death of the Earl of Beaconsfield, in whom her Majesty loses a most valued and devoted friend and counsellor, and the nation one of its most distinguished statesmen."

Upon the fact of Lord Beaconsfield's death becoming known throughout the country a widespread feeling of regret was publicly manifested, totally irrespective of political parties. In Leeds, the mayor, who is a Quaker, at once ordered the bell at the Town Hall to be tolled, and the flag outside was hoisted half-mast high. In Liverpool the feeling of sorrow was general, and most of the public buildings and Conservative clubs displayed some sign of mourning, while in Preston, Oldham, Bolton, Manchester, Shrewsbury, and other places, similar demonstrations were exhibited.

The foreign newspapers vied with those of this country in doing justice to Lord Beaconsfield's career; and this was especially the case with the journals of Berlin, where his presence at the Conference of 1878 is not forgotten.

The late Earl was a Royal Commissioner of the Exhibition of 1851. He was sworn a member of Her Majesty's Privy Council on first accepting office in 1852. He was elected Lord Rector of Glasgow University in 1872, and at the expiration of the term of office in 1874 was a second time elected, but retired in 1877. He was nominated a Knight of the Garter in 1878, in recognition of his

distinguished services at the Berlin Conference. His lordship was created an Honorary D.C.L. of Oxford in 1862, and he was also an Honorary LL.D. of Edinburgh, a Governor of Wellington College, a Trustee of the British Museum, an Elder Brother of the Trinity House, and a Fellow of the Royal Society, &c.

His lordship married on the 28th of August, 1839, a lady some years his senior, Mary Anne, daughter of the late Captain John Viney Evans, R.N., of Branceford Park, Devon, and widow (as already stated) of Wyndham Lewis, Esq., M.P., of Pantwynglas Castle, Glamorganshire. She was created Viscountess Beaconsfield, as stated above, in 1868, and died on the 15th of December, 1872, at the age of 83. In the dedication of "*Sybil*" he has described her as "a perfect wife," and once, at a private harvest-home in his own parish of Hughenden, he made bold to speak of her as "the best wife in England." "*Lady Beaconsfield*," observes a writer in the *Daily News*, "with many sterling qualities, had not either those natural graces or acquired accomplishments, or that disciplined and cultivated intelligence which her husband, as his writings show, keenly appreciated in women. 'She was an admirable creature,' he remarked to a friend after her death, 'but she never knew which came first, the Greeks or the Romans.' The illustration was a parable conveying much beyond itself. It is to the credit of Mr. D'Israeli that throughout his life his devoted kindness to his wife was never ruffled by any of

those awkward things said and done which formed from time to time the gossip of society, and that a temper naturally scornful, and an intelligence ruled by a fine irony, never displayed themselves, even under some provocation, towards the woman to whom he owed the moderately sufficient fortune which enabled him to bear a part in public life." As Lord Beaconsfield leaves no issue, his titles become extinct.

It is satisfactory to know that Hughenden Manor, which has so long been associated with the name of the deceased peer, will still remain in the possession of the family, the property having (it is understood) been bequeathed to his lordship's brother, Mr. Ralph D'Israeli.

The following quotation from one of Lord Beaconsfield's earliest speeches, delivered to the electors of Wycombe, may be said to set forth in the most condensed form possible, the *rationale* and set purpose of his whole political career. "The truth is, a statesman is the creature of his age, the child of circumstance, the creation of his times. A statesman is essentially a practical character, and when he is called upon to take office, he is not to inquire what his opinions might or might not have been upon this or that subject—he is only to ascertain the needful and the beneficial, and the most feasible manner in which affairs are to be carried on. The fact is, the conduct and opinions of public men at different periods of their career must not be too curiously contrasted in a free and aspiring country. . . . I laugh, therefore, at the

objections against a man that at a former period of his career he advocated a policy different to his present one. All I seek to entertain is, whether his present policy be just, necessary, expedient; whether at the present moment he is prepared to serve the country according to its present necessities."

"The more liberty of action D'Israeli has gained," observes his German biographer, G. Brandes, "the more he has returned to the sympathies of his youth." This is expressed with much truth in the *Fornightly Review*, of August, 1878. "If a man's consistency is to be judged solely by comparing the beginning and the end of his career, Lord Beaconsfield might be accounted one of the most consistent of politicians. But there is an intervening space, occupying the greater part and the most decisively influential part of his career, and that cannot be left out of the reckoning." Possibly a more lenient critic would have reversed the sentence, and would have said that a leader of a great party placed as Lord Beaconsfield was, in consideration of the agreement between his starting-point and the end of his career, might well be forgiven for some of the errors of the middle period of his life, when he fell under the spell of a powerful and romantic reaction.

Here the question naturally arises, Was Mr. D'Israeli, was Lord Beaconsfield a great statesman? It seems that, if we may accept his own definition of greatness—the fact of a man's "affecting the mind of his generation," leaving a mark, that is, on the age in which his lot is cast—that epithet cannot be

withheld from him. The same is the result if we apply to him the commonly-accepted standard of the multitude, that of visible and tangible success. It must be remembered that in early life the chance of gaining political distinction by taking a part, however subordinate, in the Administration of this country, never came within his grasp, and that he had reached more than middle life when he first obtained office. His mental powers, however, were under constraint so long as he filled only a secondary post, under the leadership even of Lord Derby, and at the head of only a minority in the House of Commons. Indeed it was only since his third, and final, return to place and power in 1874, that he was able fairly to display his real abilities. "It has not been difficult for his enemies," writes Mr. Brandes, "to point out the un-English character of a mind like his, which acts by surprises, and always appeals to the imagination of the masses; but even beneath such formal measures as the proclamation of the Queen as Empress of India, the political idea may be traced. Now that England has become an Oriental power, it can scarcely be considered 'charlatanism' to try to work on the imagination of the Orientals. And it almost looks as if it had been fore-ordained that it should fall to the lot of Lord Beaconsfield to represent England during the last conflict between Russia and Turkey. For the Eastern Question may be called in an eminent degree his affair, his cause. It was even felt to be so by those who did not clearly comprehend it. To what extent he

may have failed in some particulars, cannot now be determined ; but thus much seems certain, that he has not only achieved a great deal, but at the same time marked out the political lines which England must follow if she is seriously resolved to maintain her vast Asiatic colony. If Lord Beaconsfield is not a great statesman, he has shown himself the man capable of controlling a great political situation. The old man of seventy-three was practically the only man in Europe in the spring of 1878 who had courage and firmness enough to bring Russia, intoxicated as she was with victory, to a stand. He alone seized the Bear by the ear, and dragged him to the Congress at Berlin. The considerations which tied the hands of other statesmen were not binding on the representative of England ; and the scruples which would have fettered every other English statesman were nothing to him. One must have very little acquaintance with his belief in the prerogative of a great person to suppose for a moment that a treaty would prevent him from sending a British fleet to Constantinople, or that a clause in the Act should prevent him from thus laying emphasis on his words. Did not even ‘Vivian Grey’ say, ‘There wants but one thing more ; courage, pure, perfect courage ?’

“ England had fallen into disrepute among the nations ; her want of participation in the politics of Europe was a subject of ridicule. . . . At the same time Russia was turning an ever-increasing portion of Asia into Russian provinces, and threatening at last to make the position of England in India

untenable. While England was not considered to be in a position to try her strength with Russia, and Europe was laughing he gave a voice to the sentiments of the people without firing a shot, or shedding a drop of English blood, by the energy he displayed, and by adroitly taking advantage of circumstances, he gained greater advantages for England than his predecessors had gained by the long and bloody Crimean War. And even if by this time the glory of the Treaty of Berlin has to a great extent faded away, because its mistakes and shortcomings have gradually been discerned by the multitude, still one has only to remember the amazement of Europe on hearing of English preparations against Russia, of English enterprise in importing the Indian troops into Malta ; it saw a new spirit arising, and, still almost incredulous, became convinced that England had awakened from her death-like slumbers."

In closing this brief outline of the life of one of England's greatest statesmen, I venture to use the words of a writer in the *Edinburgh Review* so far back as April, 1868 :—" Marvellous indeed has that career been. It is unlike anything in the biography of other English statesmen. . . . What is the secret of success by which a man who at one time had coquetted with O'Connell, at another time had been a suitor to Mr. Joseph Hume, next a panegyrist and then an assailant of Sir Robert Peel, has attained a position in Parliament and the country to which Burke never ventured to aspire, and which Canning

attained at the cost of health, peace of mind, and life itself?"

The fact is, that "the Life of Lord Beaconsfield, like the lives of all great characters, began in mystic, heroic dreams, and a youth of poetic emotion, ripening into a maturity fruitful of great deeds." Whether we endorse the outcome of those great deeds or not, at all events every warm-hearted Englishman will and must sympathize with the conflicts, literary and political, through which he has passed, with the disappointments which his sensitive nature must have keenly felt during those early struggles after fame, and with that lofty courage which led him to triumph over all; and I venture to think that every genuine Liberal—every one who assumes that name in a higher sense than that of mere party—must heartily and cordially approve that genuine sympathy with the common people whose cause he maintained against an oligarchic faction, and with the oppressed race to which he was proud to belong, and whose rights he compelled Roumania to acknowledge at the Congress of Berlin.

APPENDIX.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS.

"SINCE the close of Lord Palmerston's long and memorable career," says the *Times*, "no more conspicuous gap has been made in the circle of English political life than that caused yesterday by the death of Lord Beaconsfield. The late Lord Derby and the late Lord Russell had each of them filled a large space in the eyes of men, and had been associated with great measures, but they had finally withdrawn from active political leadership before they passed away, and their places had been at once taken by successors at least their equals in ability and influence. But Lord Beaconsfield has been removed at a time when he was still the foremost statesman of the Conservative party. Few leaders of parties have been the objects of so much denunciation and suspicion, and scarcely one can be named who, in the face of many and great obstacles, so steadily advanced to a commanding place in the State. No dissentient voice will break in upon the tribute of admiration, in which foes, we are sure, will cordially join with friends, that

must be paid to Lord Beaconsfield's high courage, his unswerving purpose, his imperturbable temper, and his versatile mastery of Parliamentary tactics. As a peer he had fewer opportunities for display, even when he was at the head of the Government, but the proceedings of the Lower House have lost a perennial source of interest since Mr. D'Israeli quitted it, leaving none his like behind him. We are not now concerned to show how and why it came to pass that before the General election of 1874 the impression came to prevail throughout the Continent that England had ceased to have a will and a voice in the settlement of the international difficulties of Europe. Enough that this exclusion was taken for granted—not affirmed with insolence, but assumed with contemptuous indifference. The Berlin Memorandum was a final proof of this judgment upon us, and it was evidently believed abroad that it would be accepted here as a matter of course. The refusal of Lord Beaconsfield's Government to acquiesce, as former Governments would undoubtedly have acquiesced, in this nullification of English influence, the fruit of long struggles and precious victories, was welcomed by the English people; and at this moment, though Lord Beaconsfield's Ministry has passed away, and his policy is being reversed in many important particulars, the Administration which has supplanted him has inherited the authority he recovered, and is now taking such a leading part in the settlement of the Eastern question as no British Cabinet would have been able or willing to take in 1873. The gain to

England was permanent, if the advantage to English Conservatism was evanescent. Lord Beaconsfield lost, partly by his own errors and those of his colleagues, the dominion which beyond doubt was his on the morrow of the signature of the Treaty of Berlin. The causes of his failure might be easily shown, were the occasion fitting. But the fact remains that he won and wielded power as great as that of any of his predecessors, and that under him England once more became a potent factor in the policy of Europe. When defeat came upon him he knew how to bear himself with dignity and reserve, vigilant for the interests of his party, but never descending as his bitterest assailants will admit, to factious opposition. It is the highest tribute to Lord Beaconsfield's influence upon those who were closely associated with him that since the disasters of the General Election his will, and even his name, rather gained than lost in potency over the great historical party which he led in the House of Commons for a quarter of a century, and of which he continued to be for thirteen years, down to the hour of his death, the undisputed chief.

"Lord Beaconsfield," the *Morning Post* observes, "has filled a large place in modern history. Wherever English diplomacy, English commerce, or English literature have penetrated, the name of the great Conservative Minister is known and respected. He has been so closely identified, in one way or another, with all the public measures of the last forty years in England that there is scarcely a single chapter in the annals of that period in which

his name will not find a place. His was one of the names which foreigners always had upon their lips when discussing English policy, for he greatly helped to make that policy intelligible and acceptable, and to impress upon it so decidedly English a character that foreigners knew how to trust it, as a policy that proceeded upon a principle and was not a mere expedient of the hour. But it was at home that he was appreciated to the full. He had not long entered public life before he began to see with prophetic clearness the true lines of English progress, and, taking his stand firmly by the side of our ancient institutions, he shaped all his course with a regard to their prosperity. And this he did at a time when it was not the obvious line to popularity, not the most promising course for a man to take, to whom public life was a great venture. But he saw his way through the mists, and, setting forth when all things seemed against him, he made each step good, and mounting by an ever-ascending series of stages, he ultimately reached the lofty goal which he had set himself to win, became the leader of his party, the First Minister of the Crown, the personal friend of the Queen, and the trusted statesman of the nation. At this point, having done the work which he had set himself, having won the prizes he aimed at, and achieved his eminence in time to enjoy the sweets of it, his brilliant career closes at the call of an inexorable law. On the threshold of the greater life he parts from us. Those who sympathized with the principles and admired the public life of the late earl, feel an intense grief at

his death and at the close of his patriotic labours, while those who disapproved his policy nevertheless acknowledge his claims to admiration on other grounds, and gladly join in lamenting the loss of a gifted public servant, who, through a long and laborious public life, set ever before him the promotion of the public interest and the preservation of the honour of this great Empire."

The *Standard* says :—"Lord Beaconsfield, be his defects of character and errors of conduct what they may, will be remembered among the great 'Parliament men' whom this country has produced, and whose renown is the common property of Englishmen. It is idle to mete out honour by strict rule and measure. Lord Beaconsfield, as all must acknowledge, was an almost unique character, and that he differed in nearly every intellectual quality from his predecessors was patent throughout his remarkable career. Nor is Lord Beaconsfield's fame of that kind which will be seriously impaired by lapse of time. It was given to Lord Beaconsfield to colour the political life of England for an entire generation, and even in his old age—as the deep and general interest excited by his illness proves—his influence upon the popular imagination was paramount. It will not be possible during the lifetime of those who felt that influence—whether in the form of attraction or repulsion—to estimate justly the political results of Lord Beaconsfield's statesmanship. As a statesman devoted to principles, and bent on applying them in action, and as the leader of a party defeated and disorganized re-

peatedly, and raised under his admirable guidance to a position of strength and good repute, Mr. D'Israeli made a name for himself, the lustre of which no rancorous efforts of political partisanship can darken. The title of Lord Beaconsfield is chiefly associated in our minds with the late Administration, and with the critical questions of foreign policy which disturbed the public mind on the approach of the last general election. But our memory of Mr. D'Israeli goes back rather to the days when he was contending against superior numbers and an apparently unconquerable mass of popular prejudice, at the head of the Conservative Party in the House of Commons. Though he has required from his followers as large sacrifices as any of his predecessors, he yet never forfeited their support, and that to the last day of his life, when the leader once again of a vanquished and disheartened minority, he was regarded with as much veneration as he had ever commanded in his most brilliant and triumphant moments."

"Lord Beaconsfield's career," the *Daily News* remarks, "was far too energetic and important to be summed up even by his most devoted followers in the language of mere eulogy. Like one of Mr. Browning's earlier heroes, he had been 'ever a fighter,' and there are men and political parties and even peoples who now do honour to his memory in the spirit of one who lays a leaf of laurel on the grave of a gallant fallen enemy. Nowhere is there any inclination to deny to Lord Beaconsfield the full meed of praise due to his

genius, his undaunted spirit, his proud patience, his unconquerable will. To the political party which he led his loss is irreparable. Not twice in the same century could any party expect to find a leader of such capacity, such temper, and such resource. Like some of the early poets, who had to organize a language before they could give their poetic spirit an adequate voice, he had to organize a political party before he could attempt any practical political work. Perhaps history will say that his greatest achievement was the manner in which he kept that party together through all conditions of adversity and disaster, even as military critics say that Napoleon's genius never shone out so splendidly as in his retreat upon Paris before the pressing force of the allied armies. Lord Beaconsfield had lived long enough in one sense. It is not likely that he could have added to his fame, even if his life had been spared for a few years longer. But he was not merely a Prime Minister. Men have held that place, and held it successfully, who had not Mr. D'Israeli's varied Parliamentary gifts. As a debater he held his own with the very greatest of his time. He must have been one of the very foremost speakers in the House of Commons, even if he had never led a party and never attained to high office. On the other hand, he achieved for himself a literary success so distinct that in its own way it had no rival. Other times will estimate better than we can do the place Lord Beaconsfield is to hold amongst English statesmen. We may, however, venture so far to anticipate the judgment

of history as to assume that no man could have done the things he did, could have made the way he did, without having in him many of the true elements of greatness. In public or private life no man had won to himself more faithful and more loving friends. Lord Beaconsfield had an unstinted admiration for genius or talent of any kind. Whether he found it in political friend or foe, he was equally ready to encourage and foster it. Nearly thirty-six years ago he declared that 'I who honour genius' wherever it might be found, would rather see the triumph of Free Trade carried by Mr. Cobden than by the statesman in office. That same generous quality always marked his career. He honoured political capacity wherever he found it. Those who knew him say that he was incapable of prolonged resentment or of any ungenerous feeling towards an adversary. It is not too much to say that much of the brightness, the vividness, the colour of English political life is blotted out for the time with the passing away of Lord Beaconsfield."

The *Daily Telegraph* says that "History will pronounce Lord Beaconsfield 'happy in the opportunity of his death,' since he lived long enough to give lasting and undoubted proof of that same deep love and steadfast pride which he always felt for the land of his birth. Already Premier of England in 1868, his ambition might have been satisfied by having attained that far goal; but the events of his second Premiership—to which we only make passing allusion—displayed in him the profounder impulses of his political nature, which were to

uphold and magnify the greatness and glory of Britain abroad, and to protect her at home from wild and premature changes, dangerous not less to her Imperial destinies than to that ordered freedom which he loved, honoured, and promoted. Of those liberties and rights he was himself a noble monument, and the elevation of Benjamin D'Israeli from his obscure place of birth to the foremost post beneath the sceptre of England, is in itself at once a tribute to the fair-play shown to genius among us, and a romance of political life more wonderful and enthralling than any tale of fiction planned by its actual hero. It is doubtful if in after-times posterity will be able to gauge and appreciate as we can the matchless qualities, the marvellous resolves, the perfect self-control, the dauntless fortitude, the unbending will, the endurance, the vigilance, the firm temper, and the fine spirit which combined to render possible that prodigious conquest which Lord Beaconsfield made of his times, his rivals, and his opponents. Lord Beaconsfield, after all, did more for England than England could do for him, splendid as was in the end her recognition of him, and universal the national affection which has followed disparagement and satire. The more his biographers may dwell upon the passionless character of his mind, the seeming levity of some of his convictions, the persiflage and indifferentism of some of his views, the more signal it will seem that, of all things worth striving for, the command of men and of affairs in the England of Victoria appeared to this cool and balanced

intellect the best and highest object of struggle, and that of all rôles in the human theatre Lord Beaconsfield selected to play that which has made the whole Empire mourn him to-day as a friend of all Englishmen, and the enemy only of their enemies. To this proud and difficult part he brought special gifts, which will be best valued and understood when they are most missed in debate, in policy, and in council. He, more than any living rival, illuminated dry business with the light of fancy and the grace of wit, and supported the splendid traditions of our English senate by unfailing dignity of bearing and chivalrous courtesies of phrase and manner, which did not forbid the bright play of his sarcasm, nor rob him of his right to answer bitter assaults with the rapier-like flash of his epigram. It is said he was 'no great legislator,' yet he controlled legislators; and he taught patience and organization to intemperate politicians. Comprehending our English annals more clearly because he lived above and outside them, his influence has a hundred times wrought benefit to the country, and would have proved priceless to it in the days which are impending."

The *Morning Advertiser* declares that England has to-day to lament the loss of the greatest statesman she has known since the death of the younger Pitt—a statesman who, by reason of his being a head and shoulders above his contemporaries, has enjoyed for half-a-century the privilege of being the best abused man of his time, and who has been accused of nearly every crime in the political de-

calogue. Posterity will probably do him justice, but, at a period when excessive talk is thought to be the first qualification for the ruler of a great nation, it is possible that one whose merit has been that he knew how to wait, and how to keep silence in case of need, may pass away without his merits being appreciated as they should be.

The *Globe* remarks, that, "it is curious to those who remember what used to be said of the Mr. D'Israeli of former years—not always by open detractors only, but sometimes by professed friends—to watch now how conspicuously the false judgment of the past has been reversed. There is more in the silence imposed by death upon his assailants and detractors than the conventional respect that is paid to the open grave. It is felt in a degree that was impossible in the earlier part of the deceased nobleman's career, that his high standard of national honour was the outcome of a genuine patriotism, which was all the more notable because it was not in his case associated with that pride of family which often is a large factor in the patriotism of distinguished Englishmen. His later career put the copestone upon the earlier. It was during his Ministry from 1874 to 1880 that he first had the opportunity of demonstrating by deeds what the ends and objects of his statesmanship were. Up till the year when he at last found himself at the head of a stable majority, he had been, as it were, making ready the weapons with which he was to influence the destinies of nations. Now, in 1881, Englishmen look back upon the great

result which was achieved by means of Lord Beaconsfield's foreign policy, and gladly recognize that, through it, England was restored to the proud position among the nations which she had forfeited—through whose failings and faults it is needless here to specify—in the years immediately preceding. The tenacity and courage, the readiness of resource, and the indomitable will with which he grappled with the difficulties of a tremendous crisis in 1876, and brought this country out of it, not only with peace, but with honour, are at last done justice to in the hour of death. It might be wished that some of those who are now prompt to acknowledge them had been somewhat less ungenerous while life still lasted. But the tribute paid to Lord Beaconsfield's patriotism and pride in England, and to the power and prescience with which he rendered to her most noble service, is none the less remarkable because it is forced even from reluctant lips. Those who had opportunities of more intimately observing Lord Beaconsfield's career are able to trace in the culminating splendour and success of his later years the natural development of his earlier career. They at least will decline to accept as at all applicable to their great leader the language of semi-apology to be heard in some quarters for the alleged inconsistencies of either his policy or his principles. A sympathetic and intelligent student of the writings and speeches of the departed statesman feels nothing more strongly, in comparing these with his policy and his later

acts, than that his public life was one of marvellous self-consistency. He followed out, and happily with a large measure of success in his later years, the ends and purposes which he placed before himself when he first entered the arena in one sense as a soldier of fortune, bound to no political party, but making war on occasion upon all. There were it seems to us, two main principles to which he was ever faithful. He aimed at the emancipation of England from all merely class or sectional government, and yet, and without inconsistency, he was ever eager to assert the dignity and honour of the nation by maintaining the special characteristics which made it what it is. The England of the present was to him the outcome of the noble history, in which the features were developed which stamped upon the nation that peculiar character which distinguishes it from other nations. Of that character, and of the history in which it was moulded, Lord Beaconsfield, as Mr. D'Israeli, was consistently proud. To him the institutions of the country were, in large measure, the creation of the best energies and wisdom of Englishmen; and therefore he upheld and defended them on their broad and fundamental lines. For no doctrines or opinions had he more scorn than the cosmopolitan views that sink the individual nation in the crowd, and subordinate national to so-called universal ends. He did not believe in the renovation of man by abstract philosophies. Hence his distrust of demagogism, and his preference for a type of society fashioned

by experience and proved by actual exercise to be fit for good work on the stage of the world. But while Lord Beaconsfield thus deprecated cosmopolitan aims, and ever sought to invigorate the national sentiment by recurring to the deeds and character of which the nation had reason to be proud, his quick intellect was every ready to adopt reforms that would adapt the old institutions to the changed conditions of the time. He saw that the Reform Act of 1832 stereotyped a phase of development in which class ascendancy had become the dominating force. He did not believe in the infallibility of the middle classes of England any more than in that of the Venetian oligarchy. In the earliest period of his political career, he urged the necessity for a larger infusion of the democratic element in the government of the country, and it was his fortune to carry into practice, in 1867-8, the principle he then championed. He had faith in the national instincts and patriotism of the mass of Englishmen, and he succeeded in carrying a large and liberal measure of Parliamentary reform which allied the modern democracy of England with the governing forces which before that had, in his view, too exclusive predominance.

Lord Beaconsfield completed in the field of foreign policy the great work which he initiated in the sphere of home. During his long career in the House of Commons, one of the things he was most proud of was the extent in which he had assisted in carrying through Parliament legislation ameliorative

of the condition of the working classes. When addressing a crowded meeting of the working classes of the Scottish metropolis, in the autumn of 1867, at the time when recognition was first being accorded to the national character of his policy, he boasted with pardonable pride of the large number of working-class measures he had helped to place on the statute book. At that time the record, though a long one, was yet very incomplete. It was perfected by his great scheme of Parliamentary reform, and by the measures of social and practical statesmanship that illustrated the first two years of his last Ministry. Having done good work at home, and vindicated the character of the Tory party to the title of national, which he always claimed for it, opportunity and events next enabled him to work out some of his great conceptions in the field of foreign policy. With what patience and perseverance this was done can only be estimated by those who know the terrible obstacles that were interposed in his path by some of his colleagues as much as (perhaps more than) by opponents. That his work here has not been perfected was not any fault of his. But enough was done to prove that in him England once more had a truly national statesman. Having had so great a gift bestowed upon her, England, we may hope, will show herself worthy of it. And in doing honour to his memory, none may more fitly take part in the ceremonial than those working classes in whom Lord Beaconsfield's interest was ever vivid, and whose sympathy he cherished even in his last hours.

The *Journal des Débats* (Paris), in a reference to the late Lord Beaconsfield, remarks that, although very diverse judgments will be passed on the writer and statesman, nobody will deny his powerful originality, his brilliant literary qualities, and his incomparable oratorical gifts; nobody will deny him the glory of having been, whether in office or in Opposition, the most weighty, vigorous champion of that non-exclusive Toryism which has modified itself from day to day, and enabled the English aristocracy to remain Liberal, without ceasing to be Conservative. The Orleanist *Français* remarks that history will doubtless not approve all the acts of that ardent campaigner, who had attained to the first rank by dint of his own will and talents, but it will also not deny the great services he has rendered to his country and to the party which had taken him for its leader. The embarrassment in which his death has placed the Opposition, the sincere regret of his adversaries at present in office, the general mourning throughout England, shared by the Queen, testify to the great gap caused by his death. The Legitimist *Univers* regard Lord Beaconsfield's death as a great loss for the Tory party, which is thereby deprived of the most capable of its leaders, just when it needed all his experience to counteract the Whig, or rather Gladstonian party, which is gently leading England to practical Radicalism. The *Soir* expresses surprise that so adventurous, brilliant, and imaginative a mind could acquire influence over so cold, matter-of-fact, and selfish a nation, and that an exclusive orthodox aristocracy should have made

“ Sir D’Israeli” its spoiled child. It recognized the great deeds with which his name will be coupled in history, and credits him with having deterred Germany from falling on France in 1875.

All the Berlin evening papers allude in terms of sympathy to the death of the Earl of Beaconsfield, the *North German Gazette* remarking in particular, that with him ends the active life of one of the most eminent men of modern times who have faithfully devoted themselves to the advancement of the greatness and welfare of their country.

All the Roman papers publish, with mourning borders, long biographies of Lord Beaconsfield, recognising his transcendent abilities and the great services he rendered his country, and this is said to be more noteworthy, inasmuch as the general impression prevailed in Rome that his policy was not favourable to Italy.